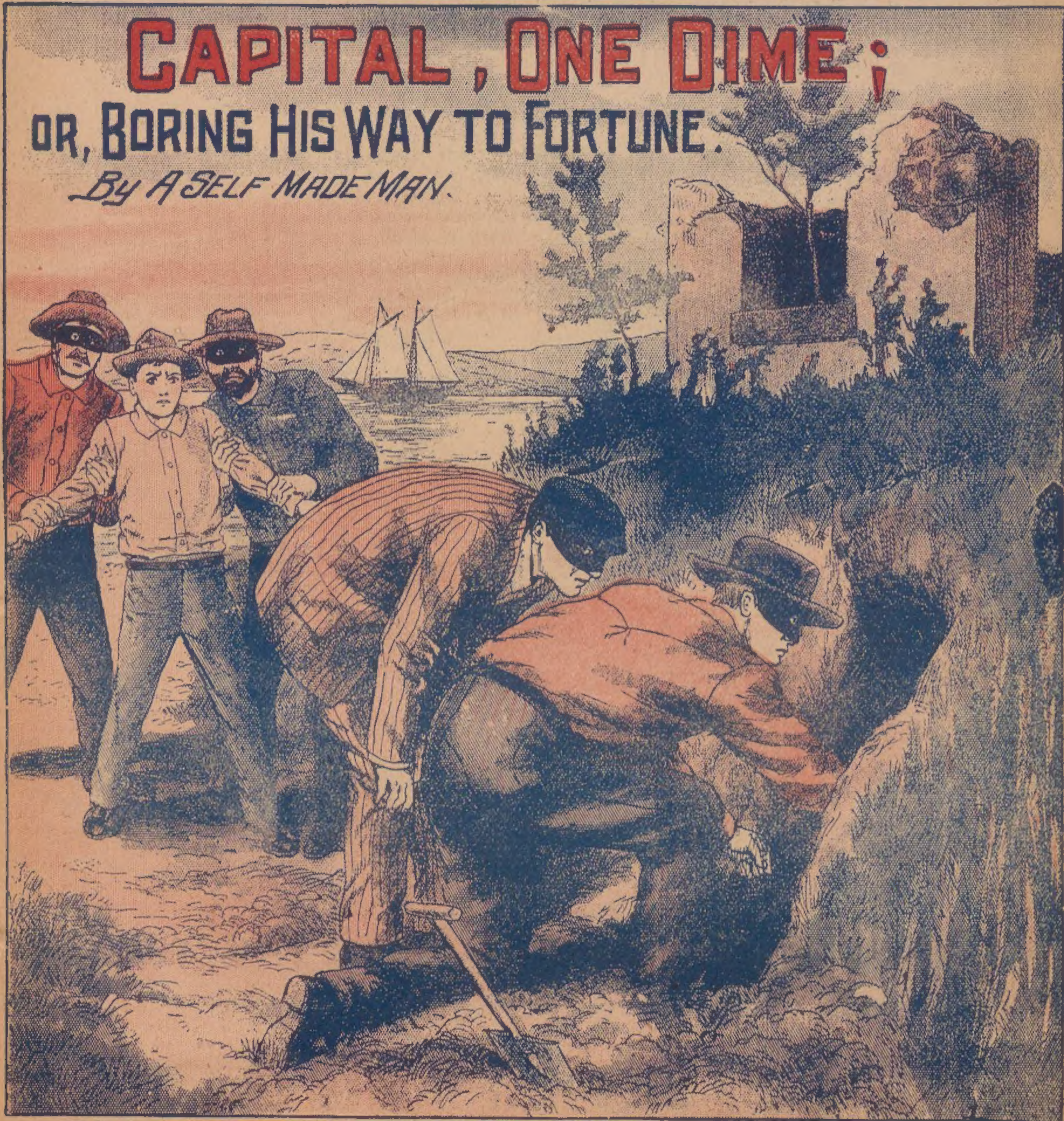


FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY.

CAPITAL, ONE DIME;
OR, BORING HIS WAY TO FORTUNE.

By A SELF MADE MAN.



While two of the rascals held Jack, Voort, and Jacobs, his mate, proceeded to investigate the hole that the boy had excavated under the ruins. "What do you make of it?" asked Jacobs. "Nothing as yet," replied the skipper.

FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY

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CAPITAL, ONE DIME

OR, BORING HIS WAY TO FORTUNE

By A SELF-MADE MAN

CHAPTER I.—A Dark Job.

"Help! Help! Help!"

The cry in a girl's voice came ringing out on the night air. Crack! The sharp report of a revolver mingled with the screams. Crack—crack! Two more reports in rapid succession, another wild shriek and then—sudden silence.

"My gracious! Somebody has been shot, I'm afraid," cried a stalwart, good-looking boy who had sprung from his seat on a fallen tree at the first alarm, and now stood looking off in the direction the sounds had come from.

The silence which had succeeded the cries and the shooting was presently broken by a noise in the dense, semi-tropical foliage betokening the approach of several persons talking in rough tones.

"The men mixed up in that racket seem to be coming this way," breathed the boy. "It won't do for them to meet me here alone or there may be something doing that I wouldn't like. I'll hide till they get by."

He darted into the bushes at the base of the nearest tree and for a minute the bit of clearing in the straggling wood was deserted. Then out of the shrubbery came a dark-featured, sun-burned man with a slightly rolling gait, bearing in his arms the limp form of a young and beautiful girl, whose age might have been seventeen years. Her head rested on his shoulder, while her white face and closed eyes showed that she was unconscious. Two men followed behind the individual who carried the girl, and their general aspect smacked of the sea. One of them looked like a foremast hand, while the other appeared as if he might be an officer of the grade of mate. He was talking at a great rate with a strong foreign accent, though the language he was speaking was English.

"T'under und blitzen!" roared the man with the girl, stopping and wheeling around. "Stop de patter of your tongue, Jacobs. You make more noise dan a t'ousand vindmills all going togedder, und notting worth listening to comes oud of dot vooden haed of yours."

"Vell, if you don't like to hear me dalk you don'd haf to listen. Mine clapper vos mine own, und I dalk to kep mineself gompany," replied Jacobs, stolidly. "De only t'ing I like better dan dalkin' is to fill mine skin mit schnapps."

"It's a goot t'ing dot I kept you sober, or dis business might haf been spoilt. I gomblient you on de fine shot you made vich put de gal's escort oud of de vays. He showed some fight, und had a pistol vich he knew how to use. I vos lucky dot his pullet missed me."

"Vell, you can dank me dot you got off so easily, captain. I safe your head from dot pullet py shootin' quick. I seddle his goose, I ped you."

"Swiggs," said the leader of the enterprise to the sailor-looking chap, "go ahead und see dot de vagon vos all ready by de time ve come."

"Ay, ay, sir," replied the man, who immediately started off and disappeared in the darkness.

The captain laid the girl against the log lately vacated by the boy who was now hiding in the shrubbery within earshot of the two Dutchmen.

"Now, Jacobs, ve vill haf a leetle talk by ourselves before ve proceed," he said. "Dis night's vork vill put a bunch of gelt in our pockets."

"Yaw; dot vos understood pefore ve left de vessel. You und me nefer does somedings for nottings," replied Jacobs.

"I ped you ve don't. Dot's vy I vant to say a few vords mit you here. De chap vot ve are doindis job for I haf known a goot vile, und I found dot he is a slick gustomer."

"You mean Casper Horton?"

"Yas; who else? He has been making loaf to dis gal ever since she come to Batavia mit her fader, who is de American consul."

"Vell, I don'd plame him. She is a poorty gal."

"He t'ought pecause he vos de richest man on de island dot she appreciate de honor he do her py asking her to become his wife."

"Most any voman vould jump at dot chance, don'd you dink?"

"Dere are exceptions to efery rule. Dis gal didn't jump vort' a cend ven Caspar Horton make de offer of his hand. On de contrary she begged to be excused from de honor."

"Vell, who vould dink it?"

"Dese American vomen haf a mind of dere own. When dey von't do somedings vot dey don'd vant to do, dey stick py dot every every dime. Dot's de vay it vos mit dis gal. She said she vos too young to got married yet avhile. She vos only just oud of school und vanted to go round undenjoy dings pefore she tied herself down mit a husband. In any case she vouldn't marry any

man unless she loved him, no madder if he owned de whole of Batavia und de island of Java on top of dot. Dot vos vot she called her ultimadum, und it settled de question so far as she vos concerned."

"She vas purty independent I dink," said the mate.

"I ped you. Dot's de vey mit dese American women. I vould as soon jump in the sea as to dook von of dem vor a vrow unless dere vos money in it. I vill dook chances for money any day."

"Yaw, I ped you. Meinheer Horton, vot he said to dot ultimadum?"

"Vell, he didn't like it, pecause he had made up his mind dot he vos going to marry de gal, und ven a chap makes up his mind to somedings he don't like de bottom to fall oud of it."

"Dot's right," nodded Jacobs.

"Being a man vot has had some experience mit de vomen he t'ought at first dot she vos just playing mit him so dot he vouldn't dink she vos holding herself too cheap. He found oud purty soon dot dis gal didn't said one ding und meant anudder. Den he made up his mind dot he vas going to haf her anyvays vwhether she vos villing or not. So he sent for me. I half done business mit him pefore und ve understand each rdder. He wanted dis gal kidnaped und brought to his house up the Jaccatra River. I had no objections to doing dot provided he paid vot I t'ought it vos vort'. As I believed he vould dicker I put de figger at half as much again as I vos villing to dook. To mine surprise he closed mit me at vunce und handed me fiddy English pounds to bind de bargain. Dot makes me suspicious of his intentions when de time comes dot ve seddle oop."

"You dink maype dot he vill go pack on de bargain after he got de gal in his hands?" asked Jacobs.

"It is quite possible dot he vill vant to compromise mit a discount. He knows dot he is a great fabor mit de government. Ve are wanted for one or two dings, und it is necessary for our own goot dot ve don't make ourselves too conspicuous in dis neighborhood."

"Yaw, dot's a fact. Ve haf peen in jail alretty yet und I prefer dot ve don'd got dere again."

"Meinheer Horton knows vell enough vot ve are oop against und he may use de knowledge to turn de screws on us after ve haf done his dirty vork. So, Jacobs, it is vell dot ve take her aboard our schooner und sail oop de river according to de arrangement; but ve vill keep her aboard till he pays down de gelt in de cabin."

"Goot. I agrees mit dot. But suppose he refuses to pay till he get de gal—vot den? She vos no use to us."

"In dot case ve pull oop our anchor und sail away to our hiding place on de east shore where ve vill keep de gal till he comes to terms mit us, vich he is bound to do as he is much in loaf mit her, und is anxious to make her his vrow as soon as possible."

"Yaw, I dink ve haf de best of de business. You haf a great head, Captain Voort. I always said dot. Just de same dot head vould haf been oud of business to-night if I vos not quick mit mine pistol."

"Vell, ve vill move on now. Swiggs und de

vagon is vaiting to took us to de schooner. Dere is no need dot ve lose more time. Ve vill start oop de river."

Thus speaking Captain Voort picked up the insensible girl and walked on, followed by his rascally mate, and their footsteps soon died out in the distance.

CHAPTER II.—Sid Danvers.

The boy who had concealed himself on their approach stuck his head through the shrubbery and watched them off.

"A nice pair of scoundrels they are," he muttered; "and the man who hired them to kidnap the girl is not much better, even if he is a great person on this island, as they said he was. So the unfortunate young lady is the daughter of the American consul in town? I reckon there will be something doing as soon as he learns what has happened to his daughter. I guess Mr. Caspar Horton isn't such a great man that he can defy the laws of the country with impunity, even if it is only a Dutch settlement. It's a lucky thing I happened to be in this neighborhood to-night. The young lady's companion and escort was shot and, no doubt, killed, so I am the only witness, in a way, of the outrage. These rascals think they have pulled off their scheme so well that no one will know how the girl disappeared, nor be able to trace her up the river to the residence of Horton. That is where they will get left. I shall proceed to Batavia at once—it's only a few miles away—hunt up the American consul and lay the facts before him. He won't lose any time in getting to Horton's place with a force of police that will make things hum. I'm thinking this will prove a fortunate adventure for me. I need a little luck after being stranded on this island with a capital of only one dime and the clothes I stand in."

At that moment there came the sound of something moving slowly through the shrubbery in the direction the Dutchmen had come.

"What's that?" exclaimed the boy, listening intently. "Is it a man or an animal. There may be savage beasts in this vicinity for all I know. It's well to be on the safe side, so I'll just shin up this tree."

He was in the act of doing so when a boy, not much older than himself, staggered out of the shrubbery. He was a ghastly looking object. His face was white and he had a wound on his head. His clothes were of good quality, but he had no hat. He stood for a few moments on the ledge of the clearing looking around in a blind, uncertain way, his limbs wavering as though he were on the point of utter collapse, then he began to totter forward again.

"I'll bet this is the girl's escort, the chap who was shot by that Dutchman named Jacobs. He looks to be in a pretty bad way. I must give him a lift to some place where he can be looked after," said the boy, whose total resources, according to his own statement, was only one dime.

He hurried over to the wounded boy.

"Here, let me help you along," he said. "Lean on me and I will try to take you to the nearest house."

The wounded lad stared at him with lusterless eyes.

"Who—are—you?" he asked, with some difficulty.

"My name is Jack Saunders, and I'm an American stranded in Java."

The wounded boy leaned heavily upon him and uttered a groan.

"Help me—for—heaven's sake. I've been—shot—in the—the head—by——"

"By a couple of scoundrels," said Jack. "Yes, I know. You were trying to save a girl, the daughter of the American consul at Batavia. The rascals have carried her off to their schooner in the river. Can you tell me your name?"

"Sid Danvers," replied the lad faintly.

Jack saw that the wounded boy was in no shape to answer any more questions, so he quit asking for additional information. Throwing one of Danvers' arms over his shoulder he placed his right arm around the boy's body and gently urged him along in the direction taken by the Dutchmen with their prize. The wounded lad was so weak that he could barely keep his feet, even with the aid of Jack, so their progress was necessarily slow. After covering perhaps a quarter of a mile they came to a little rustic bridge which spanned a shallow stream. It occurred to Jack that a rest at this spot would help the lad, whose movements had grown more feeble.

The water would enable him to bathe the boy's wound, and if it was fresh a drink would serve to revive him somewhat. Accordingly he guided his companion's wavering feet down to the edge of the stream, where Danvers sank down utterly exhausted and lay back with closed eyes like one dead.

Jack tasted the water and finding it was cool and sweet he dipped some up in the crown of his hat.

"Take a drink," he said, holding the rim of his hat close to his companion's mouth.

The boy seemed loath to make the necessary effort, but finally after continued solicitation on Jack's part he opened his eyes and swallowed some of the water. A second drink revived him a bit.

"Thanks," he whispered, "that tastes good."

"Take some more, then," said Jack.

"No, let me rest a while. I feel very bad."

Jack let him fall back against the sloping bank, and taking his handkerchief out of his pocket soaked it in the water and began to lave his wound.

He soon saw the wound where the bullet of Jacobs' revolver had made an ugly furrow along his skull. He folded the handkerchief up into a kind of pad, soaked it in the stream, and then, with his own handkerchief, bound up the boy's head.

"Feel any better, old man?" asked Jack, after an interval.

"Yes," replied Danvers, without opening his eyes; "but I'm awfully weak."

"I guess you are. You've lost quite a bit of blood I should imagine."

"Oh, dear, I don't know how I can return home and tell my uncle that Jessie has been carried off by three ruffians," said Danvers after a pause,

"Is the young lady's name Jessie?" asked Jack.

"Yes—Jessie Prescott. She is my cousin."

"Then you are connected with the American consulate?"

"Yes. Mr. Prescott is my uncle. I am employed in the office and live at his house."

Danvers raised himself on his elbow and looked at Jack.

"You're a good fellow," he said. "What did you say your name was?"

Jack told him.

"I believe you've saved my life. At any rate I am very grateful to you for coming to my aid. How came you to be in that wood?"

"I was walking through it on my way to Batavia when I heard a girl's scream and three pistol shots in quick succession. Pretty soon three men appeared, one of them carrying a pretty girl who lay unconscious in his arms. One of them, whose name is Jacobs, called him Captain Voort. He appears to be the skipper of a schooner, and seems to be a hard character. I overheard a conversation between Captain Voort and his pal, Jacobs, which explains why you and your cousin were attacked."

"I should like to know the reason if you can tell me. I thought when they came upon us that it was a case of hold-up for our valuables. When I recovered my senses and found myself alone I knew that the rascals had carried my cousin off, perhaps with the view of holding her for ransom."

"No, that wasn't their object," replied Jack. "I suppose you know a man by the name of Casper Horton, don't you?"

"Oh, yes. He's one of the wealthy and influential men of the island. He is the resident, or boss official, of this district. He exercises general control, and acts as judge, collector and magistrate."

"He wanted to marry your cousin, didn't he?"

"Yes. How did you guess that?" asked Danvers, in some surprise.

"I heard the skipper tell his companion, Jacobs, that Horton was in love with the American consul's daughter, and was anxious to marry her, but she turned his proposal down on the ground that she was too young to get married."

"That's right," nodded Danvers. "He was very anxious to get her, but she did not fancy him. Neither did I, for that matter. I didn't like his looks. He's an Englishman, but has been in the service of the Dutch government for twenty years on this island. He's as dark skinned as a native from living here so long. Although he appears to be a gentleman in his conversation and manners, he isn't a man that I'd care to trust very far. He strikes me as insincere and crafty."

"You've sized him up about right. Well, he's at the bottom of to-night's outrage."

"What!" exclaimed Danvers, in a tone of astonishment.

"He hired Captain Voort to kidnap your cousin and bring her to his residence somewhere up the Jaccatra River," said Jack.

"Why should he do such a thing as that?"

"Because he is determined to marry Miss Prescott, as he thinks if he gets her in his power he can bulldoze her into accepting him for her husband."

"Why that would be outrageous," said Danvers, indignantly.

"Of course it would," agreed Jack.

"He wouldn't dare attempt such a high-handed game. Mr. Prescott would bring his conduct to the attention of the Dutch government, and he would find himself in trouble."

"He's counting on the matter being kept a secret till he has married Miss Prescott, after which, he probably figures, it won't matter."

"You heard all this from the Dutch rascals?"

"I heard the captain tell Jacobs the main points of the scheme."

"I can hardly believe it, though I don't doubt but Casper Horton is capable of undertaking such a thing if he thought it was safe for him to carry it out. He has a fine house in Batavia, but I know he also has a splendid country property some distance up the Jaccatra River. It would be a secure place for him to hold my cousin a prisoner provided the fact did not become known to her father."

"Well, the fact might not have got out if I hadn't accidentally overheard all about it," said Jack.

"That's true. I suppose it was your intention to try and hunt up my uncle, the consul, as soon as you reached town, and acquaint him with the facts?"

"Yes, for the sooner he got after those rascals in the sloop the quicker he would recover his daughter."

"Mr. Prescott will be very grateful to you for putting him on the right track, and he won't fail to make it all right with you. I needn't ask if you are an American, for you have all the earmarks of one. What part of the States do you hail from?"

"The Pacific coast—San Francisco."

"What brought you to Java, if it's a fair question?"

"I'm sorry to say that I ran away from home to make a trip to Manila in the Philippines. I had heard that a fellow could get a good job there and have an easy time of it. I found out my mistake on my arrival. I hadn't been there much over a week when I was kidnapped aboard a vessel bound for Singapore, and was treated like a dog on the trip. This morning the vessel ran on a reef or something off the coast of this island and went down. It all happened so sudden that we were quite unprepared for such a disaster. I floated ashore on a spar and landed near a village where I got something to eat and directions to carry me across the country to Batavia. I have been on my way since. That's how I happen to be in Java—a country that I never expected to see. And the whole of my capital amounts to just one dime. I might as well be flat broke for all the good that will do me on this island, but I like to look at it, for it reminds me of the good old United States, to which I can't get back to any too quick to suit me."

"Well, my uncle will see that you get back at the first chance, but while you stay on the island I'll see that you're taken care of in return for what you have done for me to-night," said Danvers, in a tone that showed he meant it.

"Thanks, old man, I'll appreciate any little favor you may feel inclined to do for me until

I can get on my legs," replied Jack, delighted that he had made a friend so soon in a country where he had landed a complete stranger.

CHAPTER III.—Jack Reaches Batavia.

Danvers had braced up wonderfully since Jack had fixed his head, though his wound pained him a great deal and stood in need of professional treatment. A reaction, however, was beginning to set in, and the wounded boy realized that the sooner he got next to a doctor the better it would be for him. As he and Jack started on their way again he showed by his staggering steps how groggy he was.

Jack supported him as before, but at the best their progress was very slow. Danvers' head hurt him more and more and his wound became so feverish that he began acting and talking in a strange and flighty way. He grew so bad that Jack became alarmed at his condition. Such was the condition of affairs when they struck a road and Jack saw a light before him shining from the window of a native house. He welcomed this evidence of civilization with great satisfaction, and when they came up to the house, which on the whole did not promise much, he knocked at the door. A small, dusky-skinned man answered the summons.

Jack saw at a glance that he was a Jap. Not supposing that the chap understood English, Jack resorted to the sign language, pointing to the wound on his companion's head, and asking for shelter as best he could. The Jap nodded and said: "You English, eh?"

"We're Americans," replied Jack. "He belongs to the American consulate."

"Me speak English some," replied the Jap. "Come in. Me help boy. He look much hurt. What matter?"

"Wounded in the head," replied Jack.

The Jap looked surprised. He pointed to a sort of easy chair of rattan and Jack led Danvers to it. The consul's nephew sank into it in a way that showed he was all in. The Jap felt of his head and then of his pulse.

"Much fever. Me fix him up all right, but he no can go away to-night," he said.

He got some cloths and warm water and after some trouble removed the handkerchief Jack had bound over the wound.

"Bad hurt," he said, examining it carefully. "Almost kill. How got?"

"Shot by a rascal in the woods a mile back," replied Jack.

"Me seen three men with girl in wagon come from there 'while ago."

"One of them shot my companion."

The Jap nodded as if the information did not greatly surprise him.

"Bad men," he said. "I know. One capt'n big schooner. Him name Voort. He opium smuggler."

"You know him, then?"

The Jap nodded.

"Know lot," he said. "Guess him steal girl somewhere. Keep her prisoner on schooner till he get money for her to give back. Very bad rascal."

While talking the Jap cut away the hair from

around Danvers' wound, and then, after applying some kind of salve, dexterously bound it up. During the process the boy moved restlessly and talked like one out of his head. The Jap then produced from a closet some kind of a cordial, a portion of which he got Danvers to swallow.

"He much better by and by, 'bout morning. You help me put him on couch."

They laid Danvers on a kind of rattan sofa with a soft pillow under his head.

"Now, me do anything for you?" asked the Jap, turning to Jack.

"Got anything to eat?"

"Plenty. Come, me give you some."

He led the way into another room and motioning Jack to squat on the floor on a rug handed him out what the boy considered quite a feast. After he had eaten as much as he wanted Jack thanked him and said:

"How far is it to Batavia?"

"How far? Three, four mile."

"How will I get there?"

The Jap gave him the necessary directions and then said:

"You come back for him," pointing to Danvers "to-morrow, eh?"

"Yes, I'll be back. I'm going to see his uncle, the American consul."

"Him uncle American consul?"

"Yes. He'll pay you for helping his nephew."

"No want pay. Glad to help. Me look after him till you come back. Bring a rickshaw, 'hap?"

"His uncle will send some kind of a vehicle, I suppose. He may send to-night."

The Jap shook his head.

"Better not move till 'morrow, else make fever worse. Let alone all night him much better in morning. Understand?"

"Yes. I guess you know to fix him up all right. I'll tell his uncle that you're as good as a doctor."

"Me good as doctor for him. Him no danger to die. Wake up in morning lot better."

Jack bade the Jap good-by and started for the tow of Batavia. He was so fortunate as to meet a native wagon bound for the town and got a ride most of the way. It was close on to midnight when he arrived at his destination. Very few places were open at that hour. One of them was a drinking house and Jack entered it to make inquiries about the American consul. The room was full of a motley collection of Chinamen, Malays, Japanese and a number of foreign-looking sailors. Most of them regarded the American boy with some curiosity. He stepped up to the bar behind which stood a slant-eyed Celestial.

"Understand English?" he inquired.

"Yep. Me savve," was the reply. "Wanteee dlink?"

"No, I want to know where I can find the American consul, Mr. Prescott."

"Melican consul? Him office down stleet lilee way," and the Chinaman waved his arm in the direction of the place.

"It must be closed at this hour. Know where he lives?"

"Closee—'hap. No telle where livee. 'Pose you takee dlink fo' go?"

"No, I don't drink."

"What—no dlinkee?"

"No," replied Jack. "Much obliged for information. Sorry you don't know where Mr. Prescott lives. I want to see him on very important business."

"Velly solly no able to tell," replied the Chinaman, with a grin.

Seeing that he was only wasting time to no purpose, Jack left the drinking house and walked up the dark street which was close to the water front. He kept his eyes skinned for some indication of the consul's office, thinking the sign might give him a clue to what he was after. The street was lined with warehouses, ship chandlery shops, a sailor's boarding house or two, and kindred establishments. At length he saw a flag pole sticking out of a second-story window. On the door below were the words "American Consulate. Second floor."

That afforded no information that could be of any use to Jack.

"I'm afraid I won't be able to connect with Mr. Prescott till some time in the morning. That will give the Dutchman the whole night to carry Miss Prescott up the river and deliver her over to Casper Horton. That is unfortunate, for it strikes me it would be easier to chase the schooner and take the young lady off her than to get her out of Horton's clutches after he once gets hold of her. He'll be sure to declare that he had no hand in her kidnaping, and that she isn't at his country house. No doubt he has places in the neighborhood where he can keep her hidden safe from any search. He wouldn't go into such a ticklish scheme if he wasn't prepared to meet all emergencies, and I'll wager he's a crafty man. Well, I can't help it. I'm doing the best I can to reach the young lady's father and put him wise to the whole scheme."

It occurred to Jack to hunt up one of the hotels and see if the night clerk could tell him where Mr. Prescott lived. He started off at once to find a hotel. Stopping at an all-night eating house he received directions that enabled him to find one. He interviewed the night clerk and that individual produced a directory of the town. Mr. Prescott's home address was found in it, but Jack thought it was going to be a difficult matter for him to locate the street and afterward the house.

"My business with him is of the utmost importance," he told the clerk. "As I'm a stranger in Batavia, and haven't been in town much over an hour, I don't see how I'm going to locate his house at this hour of the night."

The clerk shrugged his shoulders, as if the matter did not interest him a great deal. All he could do was to point out in a general way the direction Jack should take to find the street. The boy noted the address down on a sheet of paper and walked away.

"If Danvers had only been able to come to town with me he would have taken me directly to his uncle's house," soliloquized Jack. "As it is I'm like a cat in a strange garret, and the difficulty is all the worse because it's late at night."

Jack was at his wit's end and didn't know what to do. As he stood on the corner figuring the matter out one of the native policemen came along and asked him what he was doing there. He didn't understand the man and the man didn't understand him, so the result was he was march-

ed to the station house. The man at the station house couldn't talk with him so he was locked up as a suspicious character.

"Gee! This is fierce!" muttered Jack, after the key was turned on him. "I've got to pass my first night in Batavia in a prison cell because these cops can't talk English. No chance now of getting the news of his daughter's abduction to Mr. Prescott to-night. When he learns how I've been treated in my efforts to reach him he'll have something to say to the authorities I'll bet. Well, the only thing I can do now is to turn in on the bench and go to sleep."

Jack, being something of a philosopher, proceeded to make the best of a bad job, and taking off his jacket, doubled it up and put it under his head for a pillow. Then he lay down, and in spite of the harness and narrowness of his bed, was soon sleeping as peacefully as he had ever done in his life.

CHAPTER IV.—Danvers Decides to Take the Bull by the Horns.

In the morning Jack was brought before the head officer of the station house. He understood the English language, and the result of the interview was Jack was set free, with profuse apologies on his part, and a policeman was detailed to take the boy to Mr. Prescott's house. On reaching the consul's residence Jack was shown into the sitting-room by a native servant, and presently the housekeeper, for Mr. Prescott was a widower, came in and told him that the consul had been called away the evening before to attend to some business in a town down the coast, and was not expected to return for two days.

"That's bad," said Jack, who thereupon told the lady about the abduction of Miss Prescott and the shooting of Sidney Danvers. The housekeeper was greatly distressed by the news. She said the young lady and her escort had gone on horseback to visit a particular young friend of theirs who lived a short distance on the other side of the wood where Jack said the outrage had taken place, and she expected them back that morning."

"You don't mean to say that Mr. Horton, the resident of this district, is the instigator of Miss Prescott's abduction?" she said, in a tone of astonishment.

"He certainly is, for I have evidence of the fact," replied Jack.

"Why, he's the most important man, officially and privately, in this part of the island. He is the last man we would suspect of having a hand in such a thing."

"Can't help that," said Jack. "Facts are facts. He is in love with Miss Prescott, and as it appears she has refused to marry him, he is determined to compel her to do so. The Dutch skipper has taken the young lady up the Jacatra River to Horton's country place, for which service he expects to receive a bunch of money."

"My goodness, it doesn't seem possible that so important a man as Mr. Horton would be guilty of such an act. It is terribly unfortunate that Mr. Prescott is away. The police will have to be notified."

"I'm afraid that won't do any good as I understand Horton is boss of the police, and they

wouldn't take any action against him unless Mr. Prescott personally instituted proceedings."

"Then what are we to do about the poor girl?" said the housekeeper, much distressed.

"Have a messenger sent to notify Mr. Prescott of what has happened so that he will come back at once and taken steps for the rescue of his daughter."

"You say that Mr. Danvers was shot? Not killed, I hope."

"No. I came across him in the wood and brought him to the house of a Jap who is looking after him. His wound is somewhat serious, but he'll come around all right. I must go back and see how he is coming on. As I haven't anything but a dime, American money, to my name, and can't, therefore, purchase anything to eat, perhaps you will have the kindness to give me some breakfast."

"Certainly. Breakfast is just ready. You shall eat with me," said the housekeeper. "How is it that you have no money?"

Jack explained in a few words his predicament.

"My gracious! You are unfortunate. I have no doubt but Mr. Prescott will help you get back to the States."

Jack enjoyed a hearty breakfast and then took his leave, telling the housekeeper that he hoped Danvers would be in shape to return some time that day. He remembered the route by which he had come to town and, as the distance to the Jap's cottage was not over four miles, he expected to reach it in the course of an hour or so. As there were always native wagons passing to and from the town, Jack begged a ride on one and thus saved shoe leather. It was about ten o'clock when he reached the Jap's house. He found Sid Danvers sitting up eating something which the Jap had provided for him after dressing his wound again. He was looking and feeling very much better.

"Well, you saw my uncle," he said, after greeting Jack in a particularly friendly way.

"I'm sorry to say I didn't. He's out of town on business, and the housekeeper said she did not expect him back for two days," replied Jack.

"Couldn't a telegraph message reach him?" asked Danvers. "Where is he?"

"She didn't tell me the place, but said he went to some town down the coast."

"He must have left some instructions for me. This kidnaping of my cousin is a mighty serious matter. I must get back to town right away, wound or no wound. By the way, tell me how you got on after leaving me here last night."

"I got on all right till I was pulled in by a Dutch cop who couldn't understand English. The result was I spent the night in a cell."

"The dickens you did!" cried Danvers in some astonishment.

Jack told him about his experiences in Batavia, and how he finally reached Mr. Prescott's house early that morning and told the news to the housekeeper.

"As I'm broke, barring that dime of mine, I had to ask her to treat me to breakfast. I suppose she thought me cheeky until I explained my situation."

"You did right. A fellow can't starve if he

can help himself. I'll see that you want for nothing after this while you remain on the island."

"I'm willing to earn whatever I need," said Jack, who did not care to be an object of charity even if he was in hard luck.

"You've earned my gratitude by what you have done for me; and the information you learned about the cause of my cousin's abduction, and who the guilty persons are, will be duly appreciated and recompensed by my uncle."

"Well, if he can fix it up somehow to get me back to 'Frisco I'll be mighty grateful to him. I've had all the traveling in foreign lands I want. When a chap finds himself a stranger in a quarter of the globe several thousand miles from the land of his birth, with a total cash capital of one measly dime that doesn't pass current because it is foreign money, I think he has reached the limit. That was my case until I had the good fortune of making your acquaintance," said Jack.

"You can consider your troubles over now to a considerable extent," said Danvers, with a weak smile. "You won't need to encroach on your capital of one dime while you remain within reaching distance of me. Now I guess we'll make a start for town."

"Do you feel able to travel that far?"

"Oh, yes. We won't have to walk. I expect a friend of the Jap's to call for me presently, and he can take you just as well as not."

Inside of half an hour they were on their way to Batavia. The wagon landed them within three short city blocks of the consulate, and they soon reached it. They found the office in charge of the native who opened up of mornings, cleaned the rooms, and then acted as messenger and office boy during the day. He told Danvers that there had been a number of callers on business, but they had got tired of waiting and gone away.

Whatever instructions Mr. Prescott had left for his nephew were probably at his house. The native assistant couldn't tell him where the consul had gone. In fact the man was not aware that Mr. Prescott had left town until Danvers told him. As the young man was anxious about his fair cousin he decided to go home at once and see whether his uncle had left directions by which he could be communicated with by telegraph. He sent for a native vehicle and presently he and Jack were bowling through the streets. On reaching home Danvers found a letter from his uncle awaiting him. This merely stated that Mr. Prescott had been unexpectedly called out of town and would not be back for a couple of days. The rest of the letter comprised sundry instructions relative to the current business of the consulate during his absence. There was no clue at all to where the consul had gone. All that the housekeeper could tell him was that Mr. Prescott told her that he was going to some town down the coast, the name of which she did not catch. It was clear that Mr. Prescott could not be communicated with, and Danvers hardly knew what to do. The housekeeper suggested application to the police, but Danvers, knowing that Horton controlled that department, saw no use in following her suggestion. At his request the housekeeper prepared a light lunch for himself and Jack, and while they were eating it, and talking over the

situation, Danvers suddenly made up his mind to take the bull by the horns.

"If you're game to back me, Jack, and I guess you are from what I've seen of you, I'm going to secure a conveyance and ride out to Horton's country place. I'm not afraid of him if he is 'big smoke' in this part of the island. I'll tell him to his face that I've positive information that he arranged the abduction of my cousin, and I'll demand that he give her up, agreeing to keep the matter quiet if he will. The easiest way is always the best, you know, especially when dealing with foxy chaps like him. If he doubts my evidence against him I'll bring you forward as witness to the conversation that you overheard between the Dutch skipper and his mate. That ought to clinch matters, and make him see the futility of trying to bluff me off. What do you say—will you go with me?"

"I will," replied Jack.

So the matter was settled, and Danvers prepared to put it into immediate execution.

CHAPTER V.—Captain Voort Carries His Point.

The Dutch government had built good roads in Java, and one of them traversed the island in the direction of Caspar Horton's country place. In fact, for his own special convenience, the Resident of the sub-division saw to it that the road went as close to his property as circumstances would permit, and then from the nearest point built a substantial private highway right up to his gate.

At the junction of the public and the private roads stood a sort of roadhouse for the accommodation of travelers who passed that way. It was kept by one of the natives of the island, who was also an assistant of the Regent of the district. A Regent is the chief native official of a district, and is selected from the family of a former local prince, and retained in office as long as he promotes the interests of the government.

He is, of course, under the direct authority of the Resident, who is boss of one of the subdivisions of the island, and naturally whatever the Resident orders goes with him. Caspar Horton's subdivision embraced several districts, including that in which Batavia was situated, consequently he was a person of influence and power. He had European assistants to supervise the outlying districts while he gave his personal attention to the affairs of the capital town. Each of his assistants had a native Regent to help rule the masses. Each Regent has his own assistants, and, as we have said, the landlord of the inn in question was one of the assistants of the Regent of the district in which the Resident's country house was situated on the banks of the Jaccatra River. As Sid Danvers was anxious to reach Horton's place as soon as possible, he induced the driver of the vehicle he had hired for the trip, by extra pay, to make the best time he could. Consequently they reached the inn at the junction of the private road just as dark, and this was doing uncommonly well.

Danvers decided that it was best to have dinner before bearding the lion in his den, a proposition that Jack agreed to with much satisfaction, for he was feeling very hungry. So the driver was

told to put up his rig and have his horses fed, as they would be expected to make the return journey that night. Danvers interviewed the landlord and ordered dinner for two. When the native learned that the young fellow was connected with the American consulate in Batavia, and that he was on his way to call on the Resident, he was very obsequious. He informed Danvers that Caspar Horton's country house was about three miles distant, and he gave the boy a general description of the property, and told him what a rich and powerful man the Resident was. The country on that side of the river was fertile and prosperous looking, but on the opposite side was barren and unhealthy, scarcely any vegetation existing for many miles, the only trees being those of the deadly upas, or poison tree of Java.

While Danvers was talking to the landlord on the porch of the inn, and learning all he could about Caspar Horton and the neighborhood in which his country home was situated, Jack Saunders was lounging inside watching a pretty and sprightly native girl set the table for the meal that had been ordered.

At last, after being absent some time, the girl reappeared and walking up to Jack said something in her native tongue:

This unintelligible lingo, accompanied as it was with a coquettish smile, quite paralyzed Jack.

"I don't understand you," he blurted out in English. "What do you want?"

"Me think you understan' native talk. Quawquaw tell you dinna ready."

"Oh, that's what you were getting at?" laughed Jack. "Well, I see you can talk English after a fashion."

"Me talk bery good English," she replied with a strong native accent.

"What's your name?"

"Quawquaw. Dat Guinea name. Me fader he 'long to dat country. He marry Java 'ooman and stay in dis country. Me born here. Talk two, t'ree language. Bery smart gal," with a saucy smile.

At that moment Danvers came in.

"J—ust in time, old man," said Jack. "Dinner is ready."

"You two bery nice boy," said Quawquaw. "Take um seat and me bring in roast fowl and other fixin's. Bery lucky to hab dat fowl. Missy cook um fo' 'se'f and master, now dey get what um leave," and the girl laughed as she skipped out of the room.

Early in the forenoon of that day Captain Hertman Voort's schooner, the Jung Vrow, after a very slow passage up the river, came to anchor off the property of Caspar Horton. She was evidently expected, for by the time her sails had been lowered and clewed up a boat put off from a small wharf with three persons in her, two of whom tugged at the oars while the third, Horton's confidential majordomo, sat at the helm and steered her alongside the schooner.

Captain Voort and his mate, Jacobs, were standing at the stern of the vessel watching the approach of the boat.

"Dey are comin' for de gal," remarked Jacobs.

"Vell, if dey haf brought de gelt along mit dem dey are velcome to her," replied the skipper;

"uddervise dey vill go pack mituod her. Dis is a cash business."

The emissary of the Resident, whose name was Latour, stepped on board and walked aft. He knew Captain Voort and the skipper knew him.

"Well, captain, you have brought Miss Prescott, I suppose, or else you wouldn't be here with your schooner?" said Latour.

"Yaw. De young lady is pelow in mine state-room, und I am ready to hand her ofer ven I get de money dat vos agreed on for de job," replied Voort, coolly.

"The money will be all right. You can come ashore with the girl and collect whatever is coming to you."

"Nein. I mooch prefer dot de money is paid pefore de gal goes oud of mine vessel."

"Don't you know that Mr. Horton's word is as good as his bond?"

"Maype so when de business is regular, but in a case like dis he knows dot if I deliver de goots I can't enforce mine claim. Dere are udder reasons, too, dot puts me at a disadvantage. I haf trusted to his vort und brought mine schooner oop here. I haf done mine part. If you haf not brought de gelt you will go ashore und get it. Den it will gif me mooch bleasure to turn de gal ofer to you."

"But Mr. Horton sent me aboard to get her."

"Vell, it von't hurt you to go pack und fetch de money."

"Mr. Horton will be much displeased at this evidence of distrust on your part, Captain Voort."

The Dutch skipper shrugged his shoulders.

"You know that he, as well as the other Residents of the island, have orders from the government to arrest and prosecute you for smuggling opium into this colony. Owing to the friendly feeling he has for you he has not carried out his instructions."

Captain Voort grinned. The real reason why Caspar Horton had not proceeded against him was because the skipper paid him a part of the profits he made out of the illegal trade, and that insured immunity to him.

"Under such circumstances it shows want of gratitude on your part to refuse to let me have the young lady because I have not brought the money which you claim is due you," went on Latour.

"Meinheer Latour, ve vaste vorts. You will oblige me by taking mine message to Meinheer Horton. I am anxious to make mineself scarce in dis river. De sooner he sends de gelt de sooner de business s'all be ofer. Dot is mine uldimatum."

The man saw that the Dutch captain was not to be moved so he turned away, got into the boat and was rowed to the wharf, where he got out, telling the rowers to remain in the boat, and proceeded to the house—a very pretentious mansion, surrounded by fine trees, and situated at the top of a bit of rising ground.

Caspar Horton had been eagerly watching the schooner from one of the windows of his mansion. Her appearance in the river indicated the success of the Dutch skipper's mission.

"That rascal will do anything for money," he muttered. "I've promised him £200 for the job

and advanced him £50. Shall I keep the bargain? Why should I? He is practically in my power. Why should I give up £200 for the girl when the £50 and my protection ought to suffice him? He dare not squeal against me. I am all powerful on this island. His word against mine would not count for much. Yet I would prefer not to have trouble with him. Still £200 is a ridiculously large sum to waste on such a scoundrel. Ha! Latour is coming ashore without the girl. What does that mean? Has the rascal failed after all?"

He waited impatiently for his man to present himself with an explanation, pacing the room with a nervous tread and corrugated brow. Latour soon appeared.

"Well, you have not brought the girl, I see," said Horton, in a compressed tone. "Captain Voort failed to secure her according to the program."

"Not so, your excellency. The young lady is aboard the schooner," replied Latour.

"Then why did you not bring her ashore?" asked Horton sharply.

"Because Captain Voort would not give her up."

"For what reason?"

"He demands the balance of the money which he says is due him."

"The rascal!"

"When you send the money he will give up the girl. That's his ultimatum."

Horton uttered a smothered imprecation. He walked the floor some moments before he spoke again. He was considering the advisability of marshaling his servants and seizing the schooner, with her skipper and crew. He hesitated proceeding to such an extreme lest in the end the matter redound to his disadvantage. He was not on the most friendly terms with several of the other Residents, and if the Dutch skipper, brought to bay, exposed his connivance in the opium smuggling business, they would seize it as a pretext to advance their own interests, for each of them had his eye on that particular subdivision of the island, which, as it embraced the town of Batavia, was the choicest plum of the entire twenty-two. So after thinking the matter over he felt obliged to yield to Captain Voort's terms, but privately he determined to get square with the Dutchman. He went to his private room, got the money, in English sovereigns, handed the bag to his man, and told him to pay it to Voort and fetch the girl ashore.

CHAPTER VI.—An American Girl's Defiance.

Latour returned to the schooner and handed the bag of sovereigns to Captain Voort with the remark that there was his money.

"It was necessary dat I put de gal under de influence of a little drug. She vill vake oop by and by. You vill haf to carry her, but dat is mooch better dan to have some trouble mit her."

He unlocked the door of his cabin and pointed to Jessie Prescott, who lay sleeping on his bunk. Latour was surprised at her attractiveness, and did not wonder that his master was impelled to

adopt strenuous measures in order to make her his wife. He took the girl in his arms and carried her on deck. As the schooner, like all vessels of her class, had a low freeboard, he had no difficulty in stepping into the boat with his fair burden.

As soon as the boat was on its way toward the wharf the skipper gave orders to his mate to get the schooner under way down the river.

Jacobs lost no time in doing so, and by the time Latour had carried Jessie Prescott into the presence of Caspar Horton, the Jung Vrow was slipping around the bend in the river and was presently out of sight. Horton regarded his prize with a look of intense satisfaction, and did not regret the stiff sum it had cost him to get possession of her. He rang for his housekeeper, an attractive-looking woman of middle age, and told her to take charge of the girl.

"Take her to the apartment I ordered prepared for her reception, and see that when she recovers her senses she wants for nothing," he said. "You will answer no questions she may put to you, but you will assure her that she is perfectly safe. Later on, when she has quite recovered, I will see her. That is all."

When Jessie recovered consciousness two hours later she was astonished to find herself in a handsomely furnished apartment. The afternoon sun shone through the half-open windows, and the song of many caged birds filled the air with melody.

Seated beside one of the windows, was a pretty native girl engaged upon some kind of fancy work.

Jessie sat up on the lounge upon which she had been lying. The girl immediately dropped her work and pulled a bell rope. In a few minutes the housekeeper responded.

"Where am I?" asked Jessie. "And how came I here?"

"You are quite safe, miss," replied the housekeeper in good English.

"I am glad to hear it, but I should like to know where I am."

"You must be hungry. I will have some food brought at once," said the woman.

She made a sign to the native girl, who left the room.

"I had a terrible experience last night in the suburbs of Batavia," said Jessie. "I and my cousin, who was acting as my escort, were attacked by three ruffians. Poor Sid was shot," she added tearfully. "When I saw him fall I screamed and fainted. That is all I remember till I came to myself in this room a few moments ago. Will you tell me how I was saved from those men, and how badly hurt my cousin, Sidney Danvers, is?"

"Be patient, miss, and you will learn everything in good time. I know nothing about the attack of which you speak. All I know is that you were brought here and placed in my charge."

"At least you can tell me where I am, and who the people are to whom I am indebted for this hospitality?"

"You are in a mansion on the banks of the Jaccatra River."

"It seems to be a fine place. The owner must be wealthy."

"He is."

"What is his name?"

"You will see him in a short time."

Two native girls now entered the room bearing trays full of choice food. The dishes were laid out on an expensive inlaid table, and Jessie was conducted to it. As she was quite hungry she lost no time in satisfying her appetite. Everything tasted delicious to her—the fruits being of the finest varieties on the island, while the coffee was the real Java article, prepared in a way that an expert alone understands the secret of. Jessie had only been a few months in Java, her father being a recent appointee to the post, and was not yet well acquainted with the delicacies of the island. Although she lived well in Batavia, this meal was a revelation to her. After the meal the housekeeper invited her to step into an adjoining salon to rest on a rich divan in a nook formed by two elegant stained glass windows upon which the declining sunshine produced a marvelously fine effect. Hardly had she taken her place when soft, seductive music began to fill the room with entrancing melody. The musicians were concealed behind a curtain at the far end of the room. To say that the girl was astonished would be putting it quite mild. This concert continued some minutes and then a young woman's voice burst into song, the notes of which thrilled the heart of the young American girl.

As the song died away the music chanked to a rhythmical dance measure, and through another curtained doorway six native females dashed and proceeded to give a high-class exhibition of dancing. When the dancers withdrew the attendants and the housekeeper followed them, leaving Jessie alone and quite enraptured with the performance she had been treated to. Then the girl received a big surprise. A nearby curtain was lifted and Caspar Horton walked in attired in a swell afternoon costume.

"Welcome to my country home, Miss Prescott," he said with a suave smile.

"You—here, Mr. Horton?" Jessie cried, raising herself quickly.

"And why not since this is my mansion, of which I have more than once spoken to you about?" he said, seating himself beside her. "The strenuous adventure through which you passed last night has robbed your cheeks of some of their color."

"Then I am indebted to you for my escape?" Jessie said, not over pleased that circumstances had placed her under obligations to a man she both distrusted and disliked.

"The honor was afforded me, Miss Prescott," he replied with a courtly bow. "And I have taken advantage of it to convey you hither, trusting that the beauties of this place will melt your refusal to link your future with mine."

"I beg you will not again refer to that, Mr. Horton," replied Jessie, in a dignified tone. "You have had my answer. It is final."

A shade of displeasure passed across the man's features.

"You are cruel, Miss Prescott. You are the only woman in the world who interests me. It is impossible that I can live without you. I have met the beauties of every nation and they produced but a passing fancy till I was thrown into your society, and then I had to admit that the American woman is the queen of the world."

Jessie rose to her feet.

"Enough, Mr. Horton. If you are a gentleman you will not annoy me by continuing a subject that is distasteful to me," she said. "I am grateful to you for saving me from those ruffians last night, but I should have been more grateful had you conveyed me to my father's house instead of to this country place of yours."

"That was impossible under the circumstances."

"I accept your explanation, believing that you acted as you considered best. Now tell me—how is my cousin, Sidney Danvers, who was shot in trying to defend me?" Jessie said, in an anxious tone.

"I regret to say that I know nothing whatever about him. When I saved you, the rascals had carried you many miles from the scene of the outrage."

"Then he may be lying dead where he fell," she said burying her face in her hands.

"I trust not, Miss Prescott," replied Horton, observing her distress. "I will dispatch one of my servants to try and get news about him."

"I thank you; but in the meanwhile I hope you will take me to Batavia. Have you notified my father of my whereabouts?"

"Not yet."

"Then it is unnecessary to do so. Oblige me by arranging to have me carried home right away."

"Why should you wish to leave my hospitable mansion so soon?" he said.

"Why?" she exclaimed in surprise. "Because it is not right I should remain here a moment longer than necessary. My father must be distracted over my disappearance, and it is my duty to reach him as soon as I can. Then he will send a searching party to look for my poor cousin."

"It is too late for you to start for Batavia to-day."

"Too late!" she exclaimed.

"It is close on to sundown, and the town is a full half day's ride from this place."

"So far as that? But I do not object to traveling at night. I must reach my father. I beg you will place no obstacle in my way," she said, earnestly.

"Miss Prescott, it is my desire to refuse you nothing; but my great love for you impels me to decline to let you depart until you have promised to become my wife," replied Horton, seeing that dissimulation was no longer available.

"What do you mean?" cried Jessie, a feeling of uneasiness taking possession of her.

"I mean this: I brought you here purposely the better to plead my suit. You cannot leave this place unless I will it. No one, but faithful servants of mine, is aware that you are here. No one need know it unless I say so. Here I am monarch of all I survey, just as I am the supreme ruler of this end of the island. I am determined to win you—to overcome your opposition at all hazards. Know then that you are to all intents and purposes a prisoner. When you yield to my wooing, a minister of your faith shall be brought here to unite us in marriage. Until the consummation of that happy event you will be in charge of my housekeeper, who has instructions to minister to your slightest wish save that for freedom. Now you understand the situation."

"Don't touch me!" she cried, stepping back.

"Don't you dare!" and she flashed a look at him that fairly took his breath away. "I never liked you, Casper Horton, but now I despise you, rich and influential though you are. No one but a coward would act toward a weak, unprotected girl as you are doing toward me. I am an American girl and I am not afraid of you—Resident as you are. I am protected by the American flag, and I defy you to harm me."

Caspar Horton received a new sensation in this plucky young girl's defiance, and for a moment he stood baffled and cowed under the scorn of her words. But only for a moment, then he recovered his composure and uttered a mocking laugh.

"I could almost fancy you were born for an actress," he said, jeeringly. "You act the injured heroine to perfection. Such a flash of spirit only increases the admiration I feel for you. Now that your wings are clipped you will soon see how vain it is to fight against your destiny. The sooner you accept the inevitable the sooner you will get back to the gay world again. As my wife you will become the leader of Batavia society, and the envied of all women."

"I will never become your wife—never, as long as I live," Jessie returned.

"Never is a long day, Miss Prescott," he answered, lightly.

CHAPTER VII—The Room of the Mirrors.

The evening was well advanced when the vehicle containing Jack Saunders and Sid Danvers drove up before the gate of Caspar Horton's country house, and the driver pulled the bell which soon brought the native lodge keeper to the iron bars to inquire who was there.

"We have called to see Mr. Horton," said Jack, poking his head out of the conveyance.

"Give me your name and business and I will see whether it is his pleasure that you be admitted," said the man in excellent English.

"What's the use of going to all that red tape?" replied Jack. "Open up and let us in. Our business is important."

"No one is admitted without his excellency's orders," answered the man.

"Bosh! We are from the American consulate, and we have simply got to get in."

The man hesitated. The words "American consulate" had their effect. The lads, for he saw there were two in the vehicle, might be bearers of important papers requiring the Resident's signature. At any rate Jack's insistent attitude bore out such an idea, and he concluded to break through his orders in their favor. So he opened the gate and the vehicle drove in and, following the graveled drive, soon stopped in front of the main entrance of the mansion. The boys sprang out and walked up to the door.

"Now you can take the lead, Sid," said Jack, after ringing the bell. "You are your uncle's representative, and it's up to you to push matters, but I'll back you up, if it should come to a muss. We're here to rescue your cousin from that gentlemanly rascal, and we're going to do it, or know the reason why not."

The door was opened and a servant appeared.

"We have called to see Mr. Horton," said Dan-

vers. "Our business is of the greatest importance, so kindly take us to him at once."

The native servant understood him, and led the way through a magnificent hall to the audience chamber of the mansion.

"Whew! There's style to burn in this house," whispered Jack, as they followed the menial.

"Yes; Horton spread himself when he built and furnished this house," replied Danvers, noting the statues and objects of art scattered around in profusion.

"What names shall I take to his excellency?" asked the servant, after piloting the boys into a splendidly furnished room.

"Tell him two messengers from the American consulate."

The servant bowed respectfully and left the room to notify the Resident. Horton was lolling negligently on a divan in his private apartment smoking a choice cigar and thinking about his fair prisoner when the servant entered the room.

"Well, what do you want?" he asked, sharply.

"There are two visitors below in the audience chamber who wish to see your excellency on important business. They are messengers from the American consulate."

"From where?" cried Horton, springing to his feet, and looking disturbed.

"The American consulate."

A dark frown gathered on Horton's brow.

"Did you say they are messengers?" he said.

"Yes, your excellency."

"What do they look like?"

"They are boys, your excellency."

"Boys!"

The Resident looked relieved. He reasoned that Consul Prescott would have come himself had he got the least hint of the true state of affairs. Since boys had been sent he figured that they simply bore a request from the consul asking his aid in a general search of the different districts for his daughter, whose unexplained disappearance doubtless greatly alarmed him.

"Show them up here," said Horton, reseating himself.

The servant bowed and retired. In a few minutes he returned with Danvers and Jack. Horton started on recognizing the boy he thought had been killed.

"Sidney Danvers!" he exclaimed, jumping up and advancing with a friendly smile. "This is an unexpected surprise. To what good fortune am I indebted for this visit?"

"I regret to say that my errand is an unpleasant one, Mr. Horton," replied the consul's nephew, coldly.

"Unpleasant!" ejaculated the Resident, with a light laugh. "Pray explain yourself. But first be seated, young gentlemen."

"Last evening, while I was escorting my cousin, Miss Prescott, to the home of a friend where we expected to pass the night, we were unexpectedly attacked by three ruffians."

"Is it possible?" said Horton, with simulated surprise.

"One of these rascals shot me in the head, as this bandage testifies, and while I lay bleeding and unconscious the scoundrels carried off my cousin."

"The rascals!" This must be seen to," said

Horton, with assumed indignation. "Have you any clue to their identity?"

"We have."

"Ah!" exclaimed Horton, with an uneasy look.

"We know that the chief rascal is Captain Voort, a Dutch opium smuggler, and skipper of the schooner Jung Vrow, who is wanted by the government. His companions were his mate, Jacobs, and a sailor named Swiggs."

"You recognized them, then?" said Horton, with an ominous glitter in his eye.

"No," but my friend here happened to be a near witness of the outrage unknown to the villains."

Horton cast an unfriendly look at Jack.

"Well, have you come here to secure my aid in hunting these men down?" he said.

"No, for I fancy that would be a waste of words."

"You do not doubt that I would use my best endeavors to hunt these men down, if only for Miss Prescott's sake?"

"We do not doubt it very much indeed," replied Danvers, curtly, "since I have positive information, Mr. Horton, implicating you yourself in this outrage."

"What!" cried the Resident with a black look.

"Yes, sir, I have proof that you hired this Voort to kidnap my cousin and bring her here in order to force her into accepting you for her husband," said the boy, boldly.

"Really, my dear young man, this is a serious charge you make against me," said Horton, with an evil smile. "Pray, produce your alleged proofs."

"Jack, just oblige Mr. Horton, will you?" said Danvers.

"I will," replied Jack, and he proceeded to tell the Resident all the facts of his connection with the matter as the reader knows them.

Horton listened with attention, for he was anxious to learn the ground on which Danvers' accusation was based. If they were dangerous enough he intended to take means that would render them harmless.

"So," he remarked, with a sneer, turning to Danvers, "you place credence on an alleged conversation between Captain Voort and his mate which your companion claims to have overheard?"

"I do, because the facts bear it out."

"And you believe that Miss Prescott was abducted by my orders and brought to this house for the reason you have stated?"

"I do."

"Your suspicion is both ridiculous and unfounded, and to prove it you and your friend are at liberty to search every room in my mansion. That ought to be evidence of my sincerity."

"You deny, then, that she is in this house?"

"Most assuredly I do. I will summon an attendant to show you around. But first let me show my hospitality. You have both had a long ride," he said, pulling a bell rope, "and a little refreshment will be appreciated by you."

A native servant entered the room and bowed.

"Conduct these lads to the room of the mirrors and give them refreshment," he said to the servant. "Refreshment—you understand?" he repeated meaningfully to the menial.

The servant bowed.

"Say Sid," whispered Jack. "This refreshment

business is only a dodge to give him time to get your cousin out of the house."

"I would prefer to go through the house first and take the refreshment afterward," said Danvers to Horton.

"As you please," replied the Resident, suavely. "I see you suspect my object in tendering you refreshment. To show you that I have no ulterior motive I will myself accompany you to the room of the mirrors, and remain with you while you take a bite and drink a glass of wine."

"I never drink anything stronger than coffee," replied Danvers.

"Neither do I," chipped in Jack.

"Then you shall have coffee instead of wine. I have the finest brand produced on the island. It is grown on my own property, and is not for sale at any place. You shall judge of its superior excellence," and he made a sign to the servant who quickly retired.

Horton led the way to the room of the mirrors—a small but unique apartment, the walls and ceiling of which were covered with large mirrors that reflected everything, and at the same time gave the room the appearance of great length, breadth and height. When a servant appeared and lighted the candles in the candelabra, the boys were amazed at the effect produced, and for the moment forgot the serious errand on which they were engaged. Two servants presently appeared with trays. On one was fruit and a kind of sweet cake, while on the other two small cups of black coffee, their surface aflame with the burning cognac that had been poured on top, according to the fashion of the country. Horton took the cups and handed one each to Jack and Danvers.

"Help yourselves to the cake and fruit," he said almost mockingly.

Unsuspecting of the fact that the coffee was drugged the boys sipped it while they ate the cake and the fruit. Horton watched them like a cat does a mouse it is waiting to pounce upon. His dark, saturnine features shone with an evil smile. While the boys ate and drank he called their attention to the peculiar way in which the mirrors not only magnified the size of the apartment, but multiplied their figures tenfold.

"I always bring my visitors in here to astonish them," he said.

The boys admitted that they were astonished.

"It is rather close in here," said Danvers, putting his hand to his head.

"That's what I think," said Jack. "Let's get out of here."

"One moment," said Horton, perceiving that the drug was beginning to work. "I want to show you the magical properties of that mirror opposite to you. Look at it!"

The boys did. They saw reflected in it a soft filmy curtain which hung behind them together with their own figures and that of Horton. Suddenly the curtain was parted, revealing a large oblong picture frame, hanging apparently against the wall. Instead of a canvas picture it contained a light curtain. Horton made a sign with his arm. The light curtain was suddenly drawn aside.

The boys saw a handsomely furnished room with one conspicuous feature—a richly covered divan on which reposed the form of a lovely girl

asleep. Both recognized her as Jessie Prescott, dressed as they had last seen her. They uttered exclamations of astonishment, and instinctively started forward, forgetting that what they saw reflected was behind them. As they did so the large curtain fell and the picture vanished.

"Jessie," cried Danvers; "she is here after all."

He looked at Horton and noted the sardonic smile that hovered on his features. As he looked the Resident seemed to grow taller and expand into gigantic proportions. It was the effect of the drug. The same extraordinary sensation was apparent to Jack, too. They both strove to speak but could not utter a sound. They seemed to be nerveless and paralyzed. They saw Horton make a sign, and behind each a servant, of grotesque proportions, suddenly appeared and stood as rigid as a statue.

Then the room of mirrors appeared to take on motion and begin to move around. Faster and faster it went and their senses went with it. They experienced a sensation of falling—down, down to an interminable depth. But their hearing still seemed to be clear for they distinctly heard Horton say:

"Bind them hand and foot and bear them across the river to the foot of the deadly upas tree. There leave them that they may perish by its poisonous exhalations. Thus I rid myself of those whose knowledge is dangerous to my interests."

As his voice died away, darkness, thick as a funeral pall, appeared to settle around the boys and then all became a blank to them.

CHAPTER VIII—Under the Deadly Upas Tree.

On the following morning the sun rose clear and bright upon a deserted and verdureless track of ground that stretched west from the bank of the Jaccatra River to a succession of hills running nearly north and south. The only live things that relieved the monotony of the landscape were a number of upas trees growing about at wide intervals. These alone seemed to thrive in that sterile neighborhood. They stood like tall sentinels on guard, their sinuous trunks bare of limbs, while numerous branches, covered with spreading leaves, shot out in all directions from their tops.

At the foot of one of these trees, on the leeward side, about half a mile from the river, two boyish forms lay stretched out, motionless as the tree above them. The reader will recognize them as Jack Saunder and Sid Danvers. Across the desert-like tract came an intelligent-looking Jap, driving ahead of him a donkey carrying two heavily loaded panniers. When he passed close to one of the upas trees he kept his animal to the windward of it. His course led him close to the particular tree under which the boys lay. He made no effort to avoid the tree, and finally got close to it.

Then it was that his sharp eyes spied the two boys. He uttered an exclamation and halted the donkey. Taking a sharp stake, to which was attached a line, while the other end encircled the beast's neck, from its back, he drove it into the ground, thus tethering the animal in a moment. Then wrapping a piece of cloth about his nose

and mouth he went to the spot where the boys were and taking Jack in his arms bore him to the other side of the tree. He repeated the performance with Danvers. Then he knelt beside them and felt of their hearts. Going to the mule he took from a small pocket in one of the panniers a bottle containing a reddish liquor.

He poured some of this down the throat of each of the boys. It produced no effect whatever on either of them. The Jap looked at the donkey and seemed to be considering some problem. Finally he got up and after much trouble bound the boys on the animal's back, their legs hanging over the panniers. Then he pulled up the stake and started the donkey ahead. The donkey seemed to be overweighted, but he made no kick. The Jap after that allowed the animal to rest frequently, and in this way they reached the end of the desert space and entered a tract where trees and vegetation became more and more frequent.

Finally, about noon, further progress in the direction they were following was barred by a branch of the Jaccatra along which ran a well-refined path. The Jap took the path till he reached a wood where he halted and staked the donkey. He removed the still inert boys and then the panniers from the donkey's back, and the animal proceeded in the most contented way to make a meal off the thick grass. Jack now showed evidences of returning animation. The Jap poured some more of the liquor down his throat and he opened his eyes.

"How feel?" asked the Jap.

Jack did not answer right away. The fact was his mind still carried its last thoughts of the room of the mirrors, and he was astonished to find himself in the open air in broad daylight.

"Hello," he exclaimed, sitting up, "how came I here? Where am I anyway?"

"Much better, eh?" grinned the Jap.

"Better? What was the matter with me?"

"Upas," replied the Jap.

That was the Malady word for poison.

"Upas!" ejaculated Jack. "What do you mean?"

"You not know upas tree kill?"

"No. What have I got to do with the upas tree anyway?"

"Me found you and this boy under wrong side tree. Bad place. Sure die in time. How you come in Death Valley?"

"How came I there? You've got me. I don't know anything about the valley. Never was in the place. Where is it?"

"Me found you both there."

"The dickens you did," cried Jack, much surprised at the information.

The Jap nodded.

"Walked there in night without knowing, me s'pose."

"Walked there in the night?" said Jack. "If we did we must have been tramping in our sleep. Hold on," as the events of the past evening came back to him. "I begin to have a suspicion about the matter. We must have been carried there."

"Carried there! Who do that?"

"I remember now hearing a voice that sounded like Horton's say: 'Bind them hand and foot and bear them across the river to the foot of the

deadly upas tree. There leave them that they may perish by its poisonous exhalations.' That explains the thing. You found us bound hand and foot under a upas tree, eh?"

"No bind. Quite free."

"That so? Then the rascals didn't carry out their orders in full."

"Rascal put you there, then, eh?" said the Jap, evidently interested.

"Must have, for we didn't go there ourselves. How is my friend? He looks pretty bad. I hope he isn't dead."

"No dead. Very bad though. Fear him not get well. Full poison."

"That's fierce. Let's see if we can't bring him around?"

They worked over Danvers some time and finally got him out of his stupor, but his brain was delirious, and he seemed as weak as a cat. Jack guessed that it was on account of the wound on his head. He talked in a rambling and disconnected manner about the events that had taken place in the room of the mirrors, and his mind chiefly dwelt on the brief view they had had of the sleeping Jessie.

"He ought to have a doctor," said Jack. "How far is it to the nearest town?"

"Some way. We carry him to my place. Maybe me be able to cure him," said the Jap. "Now we eat."

The Jap produced food from one of his panniers and offered some of it to Jack. As the boy felt hungry he gladly accepted the cheap rations and made short work of the food, after which he felt better. The panniers were then loaded on the donkey, Danvers strapped on again, and they proceeded on their way. They reached the Jap's habitation, a very humble cottage, about sundown, and Danvers, who was in pretty bad shape, was laid on the cot. The Jap gave him some medicine, and after awhile he fell asleep. After supper was over Jack and their host seated themselves at the door.

The Jap was curious to learn what had brought the boys into that part of the island. Jack didn't think it best to tell him any of the real facts, so he merely said he and Danvers had come from Batavia on private business, and had fallen into a trap. The Jap said he would look after Danvers during the night, and advised Jack to turn in on the floor upon a rug which he provided him with. The boy was glad to do so, as he felt fagged out after what he had been through. He was soon asleep, and didn't wake till the morning was well advanced.

Danvers was in his right senses, and the Jap said he would get well, but he was so weak and listless that he couldn't even sit up of his own accord. Jack seated himself beside him.

"Feel kind of all in, don't you, old man?" said Jack in a sympathizing tone.

Danvers nodded with a wan kind of smile.

"Well, keep up your courage. You'll be around by tomorrow, I guess."

"I hope so," answered Sid, in a wavering tone.

"These Japs seem to be pretty clever at patching a chap up when he's under the weather. The other one got you on your pins yesterday so that you felt nearly as well as ever, and now this one told me that you'd come around all right in a short time."

"It's very unfortunate that I'm knocked out just when Jessie needs my assistance. We saw her last night in Horton's house. But how happens it that we are in this house? How came we here? How long have I been out of my head?"

"Don't ask so many questions all at once. It was the night before last that we paid our visit to that rascal Horton. You remember our experience in the room of mirrors, don't you?"

"I'm not likely to forget it, for there I saw, as in a mirror, my cousin Jessie stretched asleep on a divan somewhere."

"I saw her, too. That was a little game of Horton's. I have tumbled to his crafty scheme. That coffee we drank was drugged. What fools we were to fall into his trap! It makes me mad to think how easy we were. He gave us a look at your cousin because he knew we were at his mercy and couldn't do anything. He meant that we should never return to Batavia to put your uncle on the scent. As soon as we fell under the influence of the drug he had us carried across the river and left under one of those poisonous upas trees, expecting in a few hours we would die from the effect of the noxious vapor that the tree is said to exhale. If that wasn't a diabolical piece of work I'd like to know what is."

"Is it possible?"

"And his scheme would have succeeded, no doubt, if this Jap hadn't come along with his donkey and saved us."

"Horton is worse than I ever suspected."

"Worse! Well, say, I'll bet he can give that Captain Voort cards and spades in rascality and beat him to a standstill, and that's saying a whole lot."

"We must return to Batavia as soon as possible," said Danvers, in an anxious tone. "My uncle ought to be back to-day. When we have told him everything about Jessie's abduction he'll make Rome howl around the ears of Horton."

"He can't do it any too quick, for there is no saying what pressure Horton will bring to bear on your cousin to force her to marry him. He won't waste any time in pushing matters, for he doubtless figures that everything depends on becoming her husband in order to save himself from your uncle's anger when he finally learns the truth. It is impossible for you to think of making the journey to town for two or three days yet in your condition. You can't afford to take any chances of a relapse that might prove fatal to you. Now there's nothing the matter with me. I can go just as well as not, and explain matters even better than you to your uncle. By the time I get back we'll have the house down about Horton's ears, and your cousin safe at home once more."

"Well, if you are game to do this I shall never forget the favor."

"I'm game for anything that will block Horton's scheme and save your cousin."

CHAPTER IX—Jack Makes Himself Known to Jessie Prescott.

Jack immediately consulted with the Jap as to how he could reach Batavia as soon as possible.

"You not know country, eh?" said the Jap.

"No; but if you give me directions I'll get along somehow."

"Much 'fraid you get lost."

"I'll take the chances of that. It is very important that I reach the town as quick as I can make it."

"Better wait two, three days."

"Can't do it. I must go right away."

"Best way then you go to Cobar village on coast where get boat take you to Batavia," said the Jap.

"All right. How will I get to Cobar?"

The Jap gave him the best directions he could, which were rather indefinite to a boy who knew as little about the island as Jack did. Still Jack had the nerve to try to follow them. The Jap told him that if he didn't go astray he ought to reach the village by morning, traveling all night. He was advised not to attempt to stretch matters, but to put up at one of the houses he would find along his route, and continue his journey in the morning. He might then expect to reach Cobar by noon next day.

Jack was willing to adopt the Jap's advice, for he didn't know what ferocious animals he might run up against in the country after dark. So after dinner he bade Danvers and the Jap good-bye and started on his trip. He walked like a good fellow all that afternoon without meeting a soul, or seeing a house of any kind; but about sundown he struck a large hut that stood in a clearing. He got no reply to his knocks, so he made bold to walk in.

He found that it was inhabited, but the owner was away. Being hungry and tired he decided to stay there. He found plenty to eat in the place, and made no bones about helping himself, trusting to luck to square himself with the person who dwelt there when he got back. He was resting himself in a chair after the meal when he heard sounds indicating the approach of quite a party. Glancing from the door he saw four natives bearing a kind of palanquin. Two men in European dress walked in front of it. To his surprise and consternation he recognized one of them as Caspar Horton.

"Gee! It won't do for him to catch me here," Jack ejaculated. "He wouldn't do a thing to me. What shall I do? I can't leave the hut without being seen. Well, maybe they'll pass by. But suppose they should stop here? I must try and find some place to hide."

The only available place was a narrow space between a cot in the corner and the wall. He squeezed himself in there and awaited results. The palanquin was brought to a halt before the door of the hut and Horton and his major domo, Latour, entered. They looked around the single room the house contained.

"There seems to be nobody here," said Horton, "so we might as well take possession. The girl is wearied with the journey from my country place and needs rest and refreshment."

He stepped outside and gave sundry directions to his servants. A hamper of provisions was unshipped from the bottom of the palanquin and carried into the hut. The servants got busy preparing its contents for consumption. When everything was ready, Horton lifted the curtain of the palanquin and told Jessie Prescott, who was inside, with a young native maid, to alight. She

obeyed, but refused to let him help her out. The native girl got out and followed her into the hut.

Jack was greatly astonished to see Danver's cousin there, and at once jumped to the conclusion that Horton had learned of the disappearance of himself and Sid from under the upas tree, and fearing complications in the event of their return to Batavia, was removing Jessie to another hiding place.

"It's a good thing I came this way," he thought. "I'll follow Horton and his crowd when they resume their march, and find out where he is taking the girl to. Then I'll be able to put her father on to the place."

From his place of concealment Jack was able to note all that occurred in the room. The native maid conducted Jessie to the only chair in the hut and she sat down, folded her hands in her lap and looked anywhere but at Horton. The girl brought her food and drink and she accepted it, but she ate very little, and appeared to be indifferent to Horton's evident interest in her behalf.

"It is useless for you to combat my wishes, Miss Prescott," said Horton, in an important tone. "You must realize by this time that you are completely in my power, and you are only making yourself unhappy to no purpose. I offer you honorable marriage, and a position in Javanese society that will make you the envied of all women in Batavia, the capital city. What more could you ask?"

"I don't wish to talk with you on the subject, Mr. Horton," replied the girl, in a dignified tone. "You have had the only answer I can give you, and if you were a gentleman you would have accepted it and not persecuted me with attentions that are distasteful to me. Whatever I may have thought of you previously, your present conduct toward me has incited a feeling of contempt and aversion for you. You may be able to keep me prisoner for some time, but you never will be able to make me accept you as a husband."

"We will see," replied Horton, biting his lips angrily. "I have never yet been balked in any purpose I have undertaken, and I do not expect to fail this time."

"Every person has their limit, and you will find that you have reached yours this time."

"I do not agree with you," replied Horton, with a tantalizing laugh.

"It is a matter of indifference to me whether you agree with me or not, the result will be just the same."

"This exhibition of spirit on your part makes you all the more charming, and only serves to increase my resolution to make you my wife."

Jessie curled her lip and turned her head away, refusing to notice any further remarks he addressed to her.

"She's a spunky girl," thought Jack, in his hiding place. "I wish I saw some way of rescuing her from his clutches. At any rate I intend to shadow this bunch to the hiding place Horton is taking Miss Prescott to, and then I'll decide what I shall do next."

Horton and Latour walked outside after they had partaken of some of the food, while the servants repacked what was left over, after helping themselves, and carried the hamper back to the palanquin. They did not come back so Jessie was left alone with the maid. Presently Horton stuck

his head in at the door and called the native girl outside, probably to give her some instructions. Jack thought he saw a chance of letting the consul's daughter know that she had a friend near who was ready to take chances in her behalf.

It was a rather risky thing for him to attempt, since he could not tell at what moment the native maid, or perhaps Horton himself, might re-enter the hut. But Jack was a nervy lad, and Jessie's predicament appealed to him. Accordingly, after a cautious glance at the door, he said, in a low tone:

"Miss Prescott."

The girl started with an exclamation of surprise and looked in the direction the voice had come. She saw Jack's face on a level with the top of the bunk.

"Don't speak," he said, cautiously. "My name is Jack Saunders, and I'm a friend of your cousin, Sid Danvers. We both started out to rescue you, but the wound Sid got the night you were abducted has obliged him to quit for a day or two and I have come on alone. We discovered that you had been taken to Horton's country house, and we went there with the intention of taking you home if we could get you away. Horton, however, proved too much for us, and our purpose failed. If your father hadn't been out of town on business, and therefore ignorant of what happened to you, things, no doubt, would have been different. At any rate he ought to be back in Batavia by this time, and I was on my way there when I came across this hut. I was about to go on when I saw Horton and his party approaching with a palanquin. For good reasons I didn't want him to discover me so I hid behind this bed. I am taking a big risk in making my presence here known to you, but I wanted to tell you that you have a friend close by who will stand by you to the limit. I mean to follow when Horton and his companions resume their march with you so as to find out where they are taking you to. As soon as I spot the place I'll see if I can rescue you. If I find it too big a job I shall make the best time I can to Batavia and notify your father where you are."

Jessie listened eagerly to the boy's words. She felt greatly encouraged to learn that she had a friend near at hand.

"I thank you, Mr. Saunders, for the interest you are taking in me," she replied in a low tone. "Whatever you do for me my father and myself will fully appreciate. I am very happy to hear that my cousin Sid was not seriously hurt by the man who shot at him. I have worried much over the uncertainty of his fate. As you are only one against many I do not think you can do anything for me yourself. The best thing you can do will be to hasten to Batavia and tell my father where these people are holding me prisoner. He will take means to save me."

"Hush! Some one is coming," said Jack, ducking out of sight.

A moment later the native maid re-entered.

"His excellency is waiting for you to return to the palanquin, miss," she said, respectfully.

Jessie rose and accompanied her outside. As soon as she and the maid had taken their places once more in the palanquin, the servants lifted it up and walked off into the thickening gloom, preceded by Horton and Latour. Hardly had they

got out of sight of the hut when Jack left it and hastened to follow on their trail.

CHAPTER X—The Vaults of the Old Idol House.

Jack found no difficulty in following Horton's party, as they did not go fast. The gloom of night covered his own movements, and, to a certain extent, hid the palanquin and its bearers from him, but the sounds the bunch made enabled him to keep track of them. They followed a beaten track that led across a wooded country, and did not halt for at least two hours. Then Horton gave the bearers a rest of about twenty minutes, after which the journey was resumed.

"This is where Horton is going to get left for once in his life," soliloquized Jack, as he trudged on a short distance behind the palanquin. "He thinks he is taking Miss Prescott to a place where her father will be unable to trace her. It is not unlikely that he would succeed in doing this if I hadn't accidentally been on hand at the hut when he and his party stopped there. No matter where he takes her I shall shadow him, and when I find out his hiding place I will have scored the most important point in the game. She's a mighty fine girl, and I should like to know her better. If I could rescue her myself it would make me solid with her and her father, too, not to speak of Sid, with whom I stand pretty well. With a capital of only one dime in a strange country I am doing pretty well so far. I haven't suffered to any great extent. I guess I'll still have my capital intact when I leave the island, for nobody is likely to accept it for anything, for it wouldn't be much use to them."

Midnight came and the Horton party made a second pause for rest. Jack crawled up close under the shelter of the bushes, and squatted down to rest, too, though he did not feel particularly fatigued, for he was a strong and muscular lad. As he sat there Horton and Latour drew near.

"How much further is this ruin, the vaults of which you have represented as being a safe and comfortable place to keep Miss Prescott in until the hue and cry caused by her disappearance has quieted down?" asked Horton.

"We should reach it before dawn. It is at the head of a wide inlet, about three miles from the village of Cobar. No one ever goes near it. Many years ago it was an idol house of a colony of Hindoos. The gigantic idol, cut out of solid rock, still remains in all its original ugliness. When I visited the spot a few months ago I inspected the idol with a good deal of curiosity. While in India I had heard many strange stories about it. Among other things that a series of vaults lay under it where the priests of the pagoda lived in the days of the idol's usefulness. I also heard that when the Javanese attacked and destroyed the house, and defaced the idol as much as they could, the priests hid a fortune in precious stones that had adorned the idol somewhere in the vaults. Of course they must have taken them away at some subsequent time. I learned that the entrance to the vaults was through a secret door artfully constructed in the base of the idol and operated by a hidden spring. So when I visited the ruins I hunted for the spring. After what

seemed to promise a fruitless search I accidentally discovered it. Thus I was enabled to penetrate into the vaults which I found handsomely furnished just as they had been vacated by the priests years ago. They are well ventilated by a unique contrivance connected with the hood of the idol. You can safely leave the young lady, with her maid, and one man servant to procure supplies from the village when needed, for an indefinite time in these vaults, and defy the most skilful sleuths in the world to find her. At this moment I am probably the only one on the island acquainted with the existence of the vaults and the location of the secret spring. I will disclose the spring to you and whichever servant you decide to leave here with the women. This will enable you to come and see the young lady whenever you wish to do so. When she realizes that she is caged beyond all chance of rescue she will probably consent to marry you."

"Good," replied Horton, in a tone of satisfaction. "The vaults will be just the thing. Are you sure there is no other way of getting into them except through the secret door in the base of the idol?"

"That is the only entrance. A searching party aware of the existence of the vaults, and suspecting that the young lady was hidden in them, could reach her by tunneling through the mound on which the ruins stand; but that is a contingency you hardly need fear."

"If I find these vaults all that you have said they are I will reward you handsomely, Latour, for helping me carry out the greatest desire of my life," said Horton.

"I do not ask any reward, your excellency," replied Latour. "I am perfectly satisfied with the remuneration and treatment I am receiving at your hands."

Nevertheless I consider this as a special evidence of your loyalty to my interests, and I will see that you are suitably recompensed. By the way, did you send a man across the river to see whether those boys were dead?"

"I did, but he had not returned up to the time we set out. If the servants who took them over night before last faithfully carried out your orders you may rest assured that they were dead by yesterday noon."

"I hope so. They knew too much for my safety and had to die, otherwise I had nothing against them. It was the chap named Saunders who was the more dangerous of the two, but I had to treat them both alike, as Saunders had made Sidney Danvers fully acquainted with all the facts he had accidentally learned."

"Well, they are out of your way now," said Latour. "Few people pass through that desert tract, and none go near enough to the upas trees to see what is under them, so the bodies of those boys will lie and bleach in the sun until nothing remains of them but their skeletons."

"Let us not talk about them any longer. They are gone and that is the end of them. We had better proceed now as the men have rested long enough," said Horton.

The march toward the ruin of the old Hindoo pagoda was resumed, and Jack fell in behind as before. Dawn was just breaking when the ruin hove in sight at the top of a bit of rising ground overlooking the inlet referred to by Latour.

There was very little of the original building left, merely sections of the stone walls here and there hidden under a rank growth of wild shrubbery, but the gigantic idol, rudely formed out of a towering rock that had existed for centuries, rose into the air in all its defaced ugliness. The palanquin was halted in a clear spot at the entrance of the ruin, and then Horton and Latour went forward alone.

The rapid approach of daylight prevented Jack from making his way into the ruins save at a risk of discovery greater than he cared to take. He was anxious to find out where the secret spring that operated the hidden door was located. With that knowledge in his possession, after the departure of Horton and his party, save the maid and one male servant, he felt that he would soon be able to rescue Jessie Prescott. He felt quite able to cope with one man. As for the maid she didn't count at all in his calculations. He worked himself as near the ruin as he dared go, but could not command a view of the rear of the idol, and it was to the rear that Horton and Latour had gone.

They were absent a good half hour. Then Horton appeared alone and walked to the palanquin. He called on Miss Prescott and the maid to alight, and picking out one of the servants ordered the three to precede him into the ruins.

"Where are you taking me?" asked Jessie, holding back, for she did not like the looks of things.

"To a place where you will be perfectly safe and comfortable until you consent to make me the happiest of men," replied Horton, in a tone that showed he felt he was master of the situation.

"I won't go," she cried, turning and making a dash for the path.

He was too quick for her, however. Catching her by the wrist he threw his other arm around her lithe body and swung her off her feet. She uttered a thrilling scream.

"Scream as much as you please, Miss Prescott, it will do you no good in this deserted locality," he said, with a short laugh. "You are going where no one, were he backed by the entire population of the island, could find you. But you need fear nothing for no harm will befall you. You shall have everything but liberty—and that will be yours when you say the one little word 'Yes.'"

He forced her struggling form toward the rear of the idol's base. Jack had been a witness to the scene, and his blood boiled at the indignity offered this young American girl in his presence. Had he seen the ghost of a chance of saving her he would have dashed forward and struck Horton to the ground. But he knew there was no chance of rescuing her in the face of such odds. To sacrifice himself to no purpose would only defeat the advantage he had gained in discovering this hiding place and seal her fate. So he made no move, and saw Jessie dragged behind the idol, and heard her final scream as she saw she was being forced down into some dark passage that ran into the ground.

Latour held the secret door open for the four persons to descend by a flight of stone steps and then followed himself, letting it close to after him. There was no danger of them being buried in the vaults as he knew where the spring was that opened the door from the inside, and had pointed

it out to Horton. Nearly an hour passed before Horton, Latour and the servant reappeared, then Latour instructed the latter in the secret of ingress and egress. The three walked down to the path and Horton ordered the hamper of food to be unstrapped from under the palanquin and carried to the base of the idol. There the servant, whose name was Mokarra, transferred its contents to the vaults, after which the other men carried the empty hamper back to the palanquin.

Horton, Latour and the palanquin bearers then started for the village, three miles away on the coast, where the Resident intended to hire a small vessel to take him and his party back to his country seat.

CHAPTER XI—Jack Invests His Capital in a Shovel.

As soon as they had departed and silence reigned supreme around the vicinity, Jack made his way into the ruin and walked around to the rear of the idol where he knew the secret door was. He devoted half an hour to a diligent search for the hidden spring, but it baffled all his efforts and he was compelled to give it up for the time at least. The morning was now advancing and Jack felt both hungry and sleepy after his night's long tramp.

"I must get something to eat and have a sleep or I won't amount to much," he said to himself. "There's no trouble about getting the sleep, I guess, as I can find lots of places around here to snooze in, but the poser is to get my breakfast. The only way I see of getting it is to go on to the village and try to find some good Samaritan who will oblige me with a meal. I might as well do that for I can't help Miss Prescott out of her trouble for the present. Some time this afternoon before the sun goes down I'll make another attempt to get on to that hidden spring. If I do there'll be something doing between me and that native down in the vaults, bet your life. I'm going to rescue Miss Prescott or know the reason why not."

Jack started off down the path that led to the village of Cobar.

He had accomplished about a mile of the distance when he came across a small cottage, at the door of which sat an old native.

"That old duck doesn't look as if he understood English," thought Jack. "I'll spring the sign language on him and see if I can get something to eat out of him."

So he walked up to the native, and by signs intimated that he was hungry. The man nodded and getting up took Jack inside and placed some rice cakes and fruit before him, with a bowl of some kind of liquor. Jack sampled the liquor first and found that it tasted like a very weak wine. He polished off the cakes and fruit, and drank the liquor. Then he pointed to a rude lounge and gave the old chap to understand that he wanted to lie down. The native nodded, and by signs gave him permission to do so. In five minutes Jack was asleep, and he didn't wake up till late in the afternoon.

The old man then handed him out another meal, and after thanking him as well as he could in the sign language Jack started back for the ruin. He

spent the remaining hour of daylight trying to find the hidden spring, but succeeded no better than before.

"I'm afraid it's too much for me. I'll never be able to find it. If I can't find it I'll have to give up all idea of rescuing Miss Prescott," he soliloquized. "I wonder how long it will take me to get from Cobar to Batavia? I may have to wait two or three days before a boat of any kind sails for the town. The fact that Cobar is on the coast doesn't make it out to be a port of any particular consequence. However, the Jap seemed to think I'd have no trouble in getting a passage to Batavia. If the skipper should demand pay in advance for taking me I'd be stuck. The best I can do is to promise to settle at the American consul's office. I could doubtless borrow what money I needed from Mr. Prescott."

On the whole the outlook seemed kind of doubtful. While Jack was considering the situation, and thinking how unfortunate it was that he couldn't discover the secret spring, and thus effect the rescue of Miss Prescott at once, and save her father all the trouble and expense of coming after her, it suddenly occurred to him that Horton's companion had said that the vaults could also be reached by tunneling through the mound on which the ruin stood. Jack took a look at the mound on the side nearest the secret door, and saw that it appeared to be ordinary earth.

"A gang of natives with shovels would soon dig a good-sized hole through that to a point where the first vault ought to be—say thirty or forty feet from this spot," he thought. "If it would take six natives twelve hours say to do the job, how long would it take one American boy about my size to perform the operation?"

Jack thought it would take him four or five days to tunnel thirty or forty feet, and he'd have to hustle at that.

"But what's the good of talking? I haven't got a shovel, and a fellow can't dig without proper implements."

For want of something better to do Jack strolled off down the shore of the inlet. After going perhaps half a mile he came across a small fisherman's hut. He saw a shovel standing beside the door.

"Maybe I could borrow that for a few days," he thought. "I'll tackle the man who lives in the hut and see if he'll let me have it. He can't more than say no."

Jack walked up to the hut and looked inside. The only occupant was a woman who was cooking something over a fire. She saw the boy and asked him in the Javanese language what he wanted. Jack felt that he was up against it for he didn't understand a word she said.

"It's the sign language again," he muttered. "That's a sort of universal dumb lingo that all nationalities seem to be able to understand."

He beckoned the woman to the door, and pointing at the shovel made the motions of digging.

Then he picked the shovel up, threw it across his shoulder and walked off about a yard, stopped and pointed up the inlet.

"She ought to understand what I'm getting at," thought Jack.

The woman shook her head as much as to say that she wouldn't lend him the implement.

"Seems to be no go," he thought, as he was about to return the shovel to its resting place. "I wonder if I couldn't bribe her with my cash capital, one dime. The coin is no use to me in this benighted land, and I should be investing it in a good cause. I'll try it at any rate."

He fished out the dime, which was a bright, new one, and offered it to the woman. Her eyes sparkled as they rested on it, and she held out her hand for it. Jack tendered it to her. She looked it over carefully and said something in the Javanese tongue to him. Jack shook his head, for her words were Greek to him. She held the coin in her hand, gazing at it eagerly and yet doubtfully. She recognized that it was silver, and silver was a luxury with her. At last she pointed to the shovel and nodded, and taking from her bosom a small chamois bag dropped the dime into it.

"There goes my entire cash capital," thought Jack, "and all for the loan of a common, everyday shovel. Well, if it accomplishes what I'm aiming at the bargain is a good one for me, while she'll be a dime ahead."

He lifted his hat politely to the native woman, threw the implement over his shoulder and marched back for the ruin. By the time he reached the mound once more it was too dark to begin operations, so he hid the shovel in the bushes, and started to look for a roosting place to spend the night in. A hundred yards away a small cove jutted in to the shore. The bank rose to the height of thirty or forty feet around it, and widened beyond the entrance into the form of a horseshoe. The upper end of the bank sloped inward leaving a place that somewhat resembled a rocky shed. The floor of this shed was formed of soft white sand, like the rest of the cove.

"This is good enough for me, seeing that the weather is warm in this latitude," thought Jack.

He collected a bunch of dry grass for a pillow, and peeling off his jacket, lay down and threw it across his chest. He didn't get to sleep for some time, as the snooze he had taken during the day at the old man's cottage had filled the bill pretty well for him. He lay looking at the twinkling stars, and thinking of the strange adventures he had been through since he foolishly sailed from San Francisco for the Philippines under the impression that life was easy there and work a mere side issue.

Then his thoughts reverted to Jessie Prescott whom he had set out to rescue. She was a very pretty girl and had greatly impressed him. He was anxious to win her good opinion, and he felt sure of doing that if he could get her out of Horton's clutches and return her to her home in Batavia. The plan of boring his way into the mound and through the nearest wall of the vaults was rather quixotic, but on the whole it struck him as a great scheme.

At any rate it appeared to be the only way to get into the place where the girl was held prisoner since he could not discover the hidden spring of the secret door in the base of the idol. While he was thinking the project over he fell asleep and did not wake up till the early rays of the rising sun fell across his face.

"I must have something before I begin opera-

tions," he soliloquized. "A fellow can't work with any satisfaction on an empty stomach. There are times when a good healthy appetite like mine is a drawback, and that's when one hasn't the price of a meal in his pocket. Now I wonder who I can levy on for my grub to-day. I can't strike the old man again, for he might think I was trying to force myself on him as a steady boarder. Hello! What's that drifting in here? Blest if it isn't a boat. Well, a boat isn't much good to me unless I care to row around to the village three miles away, and I think I'd rather walk there than do that."

The boat in question slowly floated into the cove and Jack concluded to take possession of it on general principles.

He stepped to the water's edge and beached it. A pair of oars was in it, while in the stern was a round wicker basket. Jack looked into the basket to see what it contained. He felt like standing on his head for joy. It contained food enough to last him for several days, together with a jug of water.

"It's better to be born lucky than rich," he said. "Some good fairy sent that to me to help me out of my quandary."

He yanked the basket out of the boat and proceeded to get away with several of the rice cakes and some of the fruit it contained. When he had satisfied his appetite he hid the basket in the bushes. Then making the boat fast so that it couldn't drift away when the tide turned he started for the mound. He recovered the shovel, and after taking a good look around to make sure that no one was in sight to observe his movements, he began work at that part of the mound he figured was nearest to the base of the idol.

CHAPTER XII.—In Bad Hands.

Jack made good headway with his work as the morning advanced, for he had no desire to dally over it. The dirt that he took out of the hole he cast first on one side and then on the other till the space in front of the excavation resembled a kind of trench. Whenever he paused for rest he took a look around the immediate neighborhood, but always found it deserted.

Apparently few persons came that way. People might have passed along the path outside the ruin while he was at work and he wouldn't have known it. As long as nobody came to investigate what he was doing he was satisfied. He worked steadily until about noon, when he knocked off for lunch. He had tunneled about six feet into the mound by that time, and was pleased to note that thought the earth was easily removed whenever he stuck his shovel into it, it showed no tendency to cave in about his ears, which was something he had feared might happen. When he started for the cove, where he had left the basket of food hidden in the bushes, he carried the shovel with him lest some native might come that way and walk off with it while he was absent. He spent an hour over his noodday meal and then went back to work.

A couple of hours passed away, and he had penetrated nearly three feet more into the mound

when, on emerging into the light with a shovelful of dirt, he was suddenly seized by a stockily-built man, the upper part of whose face was concealed by a half mask. The man swung around and Jack came face to face with three other men, all of whom wore similar masks. Two of them seemed to be common sailors, judging from their attire, while the other two looked to be of a higher grade.

"Vot you be digging in dot mound for, eh?" said the man who had hold of him. "Vot you looking for?"

The voice was perfectly familiar to Jack. He immediately recognized the speaker as the Dutch opium smuggler, Captain Voort, and he had little doubt but the man beside him was Jacobs, his mate. The boy was greatly taken aback at this unexpected encounter, and for a moment could only stand and stare at the four disguised men.

"Vell, vhy don'd you oben dot mound of yours?" demanded the skipper, giving him a rough shake. "For vot reason you are digging dot hole, eh?"

"What business is that of yours?" demanded Jack, boldly, making an effort to shake off the captain's grip.

"Ha! You dalk dot vays to me?" cried the skipper, angrily. "You had better took a reef in dot clapper of yours."

"I don't see why you should interfere with me," replied Jack. "I have a right to gid a hole in the ground if I want to, I guess."

"Vell, I don't disbute your right to dig dot hole if it bleases you to done it; but I vant to know de reason vhy you make it."

"I'm doing it for exercise."

"You done dot vor exercise—nottings else, eh? You feel cold, I suppose, und warm yourself ub dot vay," he went on sarcastically. "You dink I vos porn yesterday dot I swallow such a yarn, eh? You will answer mine question in de vays I vant or"—fiercely—"you vill haf cause to regret it. I am not de man to put oop mit back dalk, I ped you."

"If you don't believe what I say I can't help it," replied Jack, who knew better than to enlighten the Dutch skipper about the object of his labor.

"So, you vill not told der truth? Ve vill see. Here, Swiggs und Bummell—seize dis poy und hold him tight."

The two sailors advanced, grabbed Jack and dragged him back about a yard.

"Now, Jacobs, ve vill look into dis hole und see vot ve can see," continued the Dutch skipper.

While two of the rascals held Jack, Voort and Jacobs, his mate, proceeded to investigate the hole that the boy had excavated under the ruins.

"Vot you make of id?" asked Jacobs.

"Nothing as yet," replied the skipper.

He crawled into the tunnel and felt his way along till he reached as far as Jack had gone. He found nothing to enlighten him as to the boy's object in burrowing under the mound. He knew nothing about the existence of the vaults under the idol and therefore was quite at sea as to what the boy was up to.

"Dere is nottings in dere," he said to his mate after backing out; "but dot pov ain't doing dot

for fun. He has a reason, und I s'all found dot oud or blow de top of his head off."

"I don't see vot he could pe hunding for?" said the mate.

"I'd vos somedings vort' vholes or he wouldn't dook all dot trouble," replied Captain Voort. "Swiggs und Bummell," he said, turning to his men, "march dot poy down to de poat. Ve vill dook him to de cape, und den ve vill see if he vill open dot moud of his in der right vays."

Jack was dragged down to the water's edge with little ceremony and pulled into a large row-boat moored there. Captain Voort and Jacobs followed leisurely.

"Tie der poy's hands pehind him," ordered the skipper, "und plindfold him."

Swiggs did this in short order while Bummell held him, despite hins struggles. Voort and Jacobs got into the boat.

"Push off," said the Dutch skipper.

Bummell obeyed this order, and the sailors, getting out their oars, began rowing the boat up the inlet. In the course of twenty minutes, during which hardly a word was spoken, the skipper guided the boat through a narrow opening in the face of a rocky bluff. The channel was scarcely more than twenty feet wide, but deep enough to float a vessel of the tonnage of the Jung Vrow. It wound around in the shape of a quarter of a circle and ended in a small deep basin, the water of which looked dark and rippleless. The darkness was due to the fact that the top of the bluff was completely covered with a thick growth of trees, their branches intermingling and arching like a leafy roof over the pool, shutting out the sun's light except when that luminary was directly overhead. In the centre of the pool lay Captain Voort's schooner, moored by lines fore and aft close to the rocky wall opposite the entrance of the channel.

A rock shelf almost touched her side amidships, and fifteen feet or so above the shelf was a rocky projection covered with a thick growth of shrubbery which masked the opening of a hidden cavern beyond.

A thick beam, movable at will, projected over the top of the bushes, and from this hung a rope and tackle. Swiggs and Bummell rowed the boat alongside the schooner.

"Hoist him oop," said the skipper.

Jack was yanked on board like a sack of meal. Captain Voort clapped his mate on the shoulder and pointed to the bushes. Jacobs seized the hanging rope and went up like a monkey, hand over hand. As soon as he disappeared through the shrubbery the skipper followed him. Standing with his head thrust through the bushes the captain ordered the two sailors to send the boy up. They tied a rope under Jack's arms, stuck the hook of the tackle-block into it, and hauled away.

"Where in thunder am I going to?" muttered the lad as he rose into the air. Being blindfolded he had no idea of the situation. Presently he was grabbed by the skipper's sinewy arms and hauled inside after the fashion of a bale of goods.

The hook was detached and the skipper pushed him before him through a rocky passage which ended in a roomy cavern, furnished with rude

wooden benches and a long table, and populated by half a dozen hard-looking men—the major part of the crew of the smuggling schooner. The men were lounging around, smoking and drinking, while two were playing cards for small stakes. The entrances to two other caverns were to be seen at the back. The place was lighted by ordinary reflector lamps attached to the walls. Beside one of these lamps hung a large wooden clock of American manufacture. A single chair stood at the head of the table. This was only used by Captain Voort.

"Jacobs, tie de poy to dot chair," said the skipper.

Jack was forced into the seat and promptly tied to it. The skipper stepped up and tore the cloth from the boy's eyes, revealing to him all that we have just described. Voort then rolled a big empty keg in front of Jack, sat on it and drew a revolver from his pocket.

"Look at dot clock," he said pointing to the timepiece on the wall.

Jack instinctively looked.

"Id wants fife minudes of four. Now you vill told me de reason vhy you dig dot hole in de mound before de clock strikes de hour or by himmel I pu a pullet int dot head of yours."

Captain Voort cocked the revolver and looked as if he meant what he said.

CHAPTER XIII.—Boring His Way to Fortune.

It was the most sternuous moment in Jack's life. Captain Voort sat and glared at him, while Jacobs and the crew regarded him with curiosity and interest. Jack never thought quicker in his life. If he told the truth it would doubtless be fatal to Jessie Prescott's interests, for he believed that the Dutch skipper would immediately take means to notify Caspar Horton of his efforts to rescue the girl, and thus Horton would find out that he had in some way escaped death through the upas tree, and would lose no time in making another and surer effort to get rid of him. What other story could he tell that would have the color of truth? As his mind was reaching out on all sides for an idea a shrill whistle suddenly sounded through the cavern. Captain Voort sprang on his feet, with an ejaculation, and every man in the place became suddenly on the alert. Jack was completely forgotten, for the whistle was recognized as a danger signal from the man on lookout above, who had come to the rear entrance of one of the caverns beyond and sounded it as a preliminary intimation that there was something in the wind.

The skipper started for the rear cavern to meet the lookout man and learn from him the exact nature of the danger that threatened. He was gone some time, during which Jacobs and the sailors gathered together in a group and talked in a language that was foreign to Jack's ears. The clock struck four, but no one paid any attention to the fact, nor to the boy either.

"If I could only get loose I might be able to sneak out of this," thought Jack.

He only needed to work his right hand free, for then he could put it in his pocket, get out

his claspknife, open the blade with the help of his teeth and cut his bonds in a jiffy.

With that purpose in view he tugged and strained at the cord that held his arms in limbo behind the back. Swiggs hadn't made a first-class job of it in the boat, probably not considering it necessary under the circumstances, for the boy had a very small chance of getting away from the four of them even if his arms were free.

Jack soon loosened the cords so that he was able to draw out his right arm. To get out his knife, open it and hack at the rope that held him to the chair was but the work of a few moments, and in less time than it has taken us to describe his efforts he was free and ready for his next move.

Glancing at Jacobs and the bunch of sailors he saw that they were deeply interested in canvassing the cause of the alarm. As cautiously as possible the boy sank to the floor, and putting the table between himself and the opium smugglers he made for the opening leading into the next cave. Passing into the inner cavern he found it a sort of storage room for a lot of small bundles resembling the Chinese bombs he had seen sold in San Francisco around the Fourth of July, only they were about twice the size. Jack judged that they were filled with smuggled opium, ready to be disposed of when the proper time came. Besides the bundles there were several oblong boxes that looked suspiciously like old-fashioned coffins, and a large crate full of straw.

Knowing that he had no time to lose Jack was about to ascent the steps when he heard Captain Voort's voice, and then heavy steps at the top of the stone flight that indicated he was coming back.

"What in creation will I do?" he asked himself. "I can't tackle him even alone with an even chance of coming out ahead, for he's armed, and would shoot me as quick as a wink."

Jack was at his wit's end when his eyes fell on the crate. It was the only place in which he could hide, and quick as a flash he popped into it and sank down into the straw. Hardly had he accomplished this move than the Dutch skipper came into the storeroom. Jack expected he would pass on into the main cavern, and the moment he did so he meant to sneak up the steps and make his escape if the way was clear. Captain Voort, however, didn't go into the other cavern but called the men who were there into the storeroom. The skipper issued an order in a foreign tongue. The boxes that looked like coffins were hauled out, and into them the sailors began to pack the small bundles in a lively fashion. As fast as they were loaded the covers were nailed on and a couple of men disappeared with them up the steps. The skipper stayed in the cavern the whole time and bossed the job, with Jacobs to help the good work along. Then he followed the last box up the steps and Jack was left alone in the place. As soon as he was sure of that fact he jumped out of the box. He darted into the front cavern and thence through the passage to the opening covered with bushes. Only that he remembered having been hauled through the bushes after he was hoisted he probably would have pushed his way through them and thumbled out into space, which could hardly have failed of bringing about his instant death.

He therefore advanced cautiously, holding on to the projecting beam to which the tackle was attached. In this way he saved himself from a terrible and unexpected fall. He soon got the lay of the place and saw the basin with the schooner in it below. As far as he could see she appeared to be deserted at that moment. Under her stern floated the rowboat in which he had been brought to the smugglers' retreat.

"If I can reach that without being seen I ought easily to be able to make my escape out into the inlet," he thought.

As there seemed to be a good chance of his doing so, and every moment counted, he seized the hanging rope, swung out on it, and slid down to the shelf below in a jiffy. Stepping cautiously aboard the *Jung Vrow* he slipped over to her stern, dropped into the boat, cut the line loose, grabbed a pair of oars and began to pull for the entrance to the channel. He reached it without raising any alarm, glided around into its narrow course and then bending to his oars pulled as hard as he could. After swinging around the arc of a circle he saw the broad inlet before him. His heart now beat with satisfaction, for he felt sure he had outwitted the Dutch skipper and his crew.

"Captain Voort will have a fit when he discovers that I have got away," he soliloquized, as he pulled along the inlet close in to the base of the bluffs that extended for perhaps a quarter of a mile north of the entrance to the basin, gradually decreasing in height till they merged into the flat shore. "I dare say he'll hunt for me after a while if his attention isn't otherwise taken up, but he won't look for me to return to the mound, so that is just the place I'll make for, and resume my digging, for I mustn't let the grass grow under my feet if I'm going to bore my way, like a mole, into the vaults where Miss Prescott is confined."

In due time and without seeing any one along the shore, Jack reached the scene of his labor, and hiding the boat in the cove resumed his digging till the sun set, when he knocked off for supper. The night as usual was a fine one, the sky being bright with stars, and not feeling sleepy he concluded to go on with his digging for an hour or two at any rate.

He could not have worked with greater zest had he known that he was boring his way to a fortune, which was an actual fact, strange as the fact may seem. All unconscious of the good luck that was before him he shoveled away like a good fellow, increasing the depth of the hole a foot at a time and then hauling the dirt out into the open air to make room for further progress. His eagerness to reach the goal of his efforts caused him to prolong his work much beyond the time he had calculated to devote to it before turning in for the night. At last he woke up to the fact that he was pretty tired.

"I guess I'll quit," he said, shoving his shovel forward for the last time.

Instead of sinking into soft dirt as before it met with a decided resistance, and the clinking sound told him that he had struck stone. In a moment his fatigue vanished from his thoughts.

"I believe I've hit the outer wall of the vaults," he said excitedly.

He crawled forward and felt of the obstruction. It was stone beyond a doubt. Striking a match he pulled the dirt away from around the place as much as possible, and his sharp eyes detected that the mortar in which the stones were embedded was loose and crumbly.

"I believe I can easily loosen them," he said. "At any rate I intend to make a big effort to do so. This tunnel is mighty hot and stuffy. I must get a whiff of fresh air before I begin operations on the stone wall."

He crawled out into the night and breathed in the delicious breeze that was blowing from up the inlet from the ocean beyond. Revived and reinvigorated by the fresh air he returned to the head of the tunnel and with the aid of his knife began an attack in the dark on the old mortar that held the stones together. The stuff yielded to his efforts like flashes of dried putty. In half an hour he had the stone he was working on so loose that he was able to dislodge it from its place. Returning to open air again for a few minutes he sat down at the entrance to the tunnel and congratulated himself on the remarkable success of his work so far. He thought how grateful Jessie Prescott would be to him when he restored her to freedom of action, and eventually to her father's arms.

Perhaps he indulged in a little sentiment in connection with the girl. If he did, he may be excused, for she was a lovely girl, and boys of his age are naturally susceptible to the charms of an attractive young lady just seventeen. Fully an hour passed away before he resumed work on the wall. He had to do a lot more digging to make the way clear so as to be able to get at a larger space of the stone obstruction. The second stone came out much easier than the first, because he had only half as much labor to put on it, and could work to better advantage.

The third was easier still, and when he pulled it out that section of the wall was weakened so that half a dozen of the stones fell for lack of support. Loosening another upper stone a whole section of the wall fell apart, blocking up the hole he had made. Jack struck a match and looked at the wreck.

"I'm glad I wasn't trying to get through that hole when that stuff gave way. I'd have got caught fast and pretty well mashed up. I wonder when I push this debris out of the way if more of it will follow?"

By degrees he pushed the stones inside what he presumed was a section of the vaults, and finally opened up a hole plenty large enough to crawl through.

Before attempting such a thing he lighted another match and held it inside. Looking sharply around it he saw a wide stone shelf a few feet from where he was. It was covered with a mass of stuff, thrown together in confusion, that sparkled and glowed in the light of the match.

"What can that be?" he asked himself.

Striking one more match he looked at the glittering objects huddled together on the shelf. He was fairly struck dumb with amazement when he saw that the bunch consisted of diamonds, rubies, pearls and other precious stones—the whole representing a considerable fortune. He handled

them gingerly, as if he feared they would fall into meaningless dust, but they didn't. They were the real things, worth thousands of pounds in English money, and five times as much in American coin.

"Lord! What a find!" he exclaimed, with bated breath. "Instead of reaching the vaults where Miss Prescott is a prisoner I have actually been boring my way to fortune."

CHAPTER XIV.—Conclusion.

There was no doubt about the fact that Jack had tumbled into a good thing.

"That capital of one dime has produced great results," breathed Jack. "I'll bet no one ever invested ten cents to better advantage than I did when I borrowed that shovel at the outlay of my total resources. If I can carry this stuff to Batavia without accident I'll be as rich as a mogul. How Sid Danvers will open his eyes when he sees it! Gee! I'm in great luck!"

Then he began to wonder how that collection of priceless jewels came to be thrown at haphazard on that shelf. All at once he remembered the conversation he had overheard between Caspar Horton and his side partner two nights before.

"Yes, that accounts for these jewels being here," thought Jack. "The priests hid them in this place, and subsequently were wiped out before they could return to take them away. And now I, a plain, everyday American boy, who was not born at that time, have in the most astonishing way come into possession of them. I must see to it that no one, particularly that rascal, Captain Voort, gets them away from me. It would be hard luck indeed to lose them after finding them."

Afraid that the Dutch skipper might come that way in the morning and investigate the tunnel again, Jack determined to remove the treasure without delay. He made his way into the open air and back to the little cove. Removing his supply of provisions from the basket and wrapping it up in a piece of sailcloth he found in the boat, he returned to the mound, crawled once more into the small vault and transferred the whole of the treasure to the basket. Then he carried the basket outside and carefully concealed it in a patch of bushes where no one was likely to meddle with it.

"I feel about all in," he said. "I think I can't do better than to take a sleep. It won't be safe for me to use the place in the cove where I slept last night. It's too open, and as I'm likely to sleep well into morning, if Captain Voort came along he would be sure to see me and then I would be in trouble again."

He decided to sleep in the bushes, no matter how uncomfortable his bed might be. Accordingly he chose a spot where discovery seemed unlikely, and though his mind was in a fever of excitement over the discovery of such a big treasure, he was so dead tired physically that he soon dropped off to sleep.

It was then close on to dawn, and an hour later the sun rose. The bushes were thick around him and over his head, and so the sun's rays did not penetrate to any great extent the spot where he

lay. Consequently his fatigue kept him locked in repose until nearly two o'clock in the afternoon, when he awoke, feeling much refreshed, and ready for fresh exertions in behalf of Jessie Prescott. After cautiously reconnoitering the neighborhood he made a hearty breakfast off his provisions, and after spending some time looking at the jewels in the basket, and estimating their value, he started once more for the mound. Before attacking the inner stone wall it occurred to Jack to make another effort to locate the hidden spring of the secret door at the base of the idol. So he walked to the top of the mound and began looking the stone all over.

"Whoever made that door was an artist from artistville, bet your life," he mused. "It fits as snugly as a glove on a woman's hand. You can't see the faintest outline. As for the spring that opens it, why——"

He broke off suddenly, for at that moment the stone in front of him began to move outward, as if propelled by invisible means. When it reached a point at a right angle with the base a man stepped out. He was the servant Mokarra, on his way to the village of Cobar for a supply of provisions. The stone partly concealed Jack's presence, and the native did not see him till he started to close the door. Then he uttered an exclamation of consternation. As the door swung back Jack, alive to the opportunity that had so unexpectedly presented itself to him, grabbed it and prevented it from closing.

Mokarra, recovering himself, grasped the boy's arm and tried to tear it away. It was Jack's left arm, and with his right he clouted the native on the point of the jaw with such effect that he fell on the ground quite dazed for the moment. Jack seized one of his legs and shoved it into the opening so as to hold the secret door partly open, then tearing the jacket half off the native, he ripped in into stripes, and in a few moments bound and gagged the fellow so that he was quite helpless. He then got a good sized stone and placed it so that the door could not shut entirely.

Flashing a match down the stone steps he saw that they went down into deep darkness. He ran down the flight and saw that they ended in a space where there was a door. Opening the door he looked into a corridor, which was dimly illuminated by a light that shone through a door from some room beyond.

"The way is clear to Miss Prescott, and her rescue will be a matter of only a few moments. Before I go to her I guess I'll drag that fellow above down here for fear he might get loose and make me a prisoner," said Jack.

He returned to the entrance above and hauled Mokarra down the steps and into the corridor. Leaving him just inside the door he rushed to the door through which the light shone and looked in. On a soft couch lay Jessie Prescott with her eyes closed. On the floor beside her crouched the maid fanning her industriously with a big fan made out of peacock's feathers. Jack sprang into the vaulted room with a shout. The maid jumped up in alarm, while Jessie rose into a sitting posture with an expression of fear on her lovely features.

But this changed to joy on recognizing Jack's face. She had only seen it once before, but she had never forgotten his features. That he was a

brave boy she felt sure. That he would keep his word she was confident. So she made him a sort of hero in her thoughts, and as time passed his good-looking, manly face more deeply impressed itself in her mind, until her young heart, with nothing else to occupy it, began to interest itself to no small extent in him. She wondered who he was, and what had brought him to the island of Java. She was sure he was worthy of her respect and friendship. At any rate he had said he was a friend of her cousin, Sid Danvers, and that fact assured her that he was all right.

"Here I am, Miss Prescott," cried Jack, in cheery tones. "I have kept my word to rescue you if I could manage it, and I have succeeded, for all you have to do is to accompany me to the surface and you will be as free once more as the air."

"How can I ever thank you enough for your efforts in my behalf?" she said, impulsively.

"Don't worry about that," replied Jack, with a glance of admiration into her lovely countenance. "It gives me great pleasure to serve you. Now come, for we have no time to lose. I shall take you to the village of Cobar, which is about three miles from here on the coast, and I dare say we shall manage to find some small craft that will take us to Batavia."

"What about this girl? You're not going to leave her shut up down here?"

"What's your name?" Jack asked the maid.

"Zamine," she replied, with a cowed look.

"Do you want us to leave you alone in these vaults till your master, Caspar Horton, comes back to find his prisoner flown?" said Jack.

"Oh, no, no, no," she cried in a frightened tone.

"If we take you with us will you swear to do as Miss Prescott wants you to?"

"Yes, yes, yes."

"Very good, then you shall come. Follow me, both of you."

Jack decided to free the man servant, since to leave him in that vault, bound as he was, might result in his death.

"Now," said Jack, when they emerged into the open air, "we'll march down to a little cove a short distance from here where I have a couple of boats. One of them will do to take us to Cobar in, and we ought to get there in the course of an hour or two."

When they reached the cove Jack decided that the boat belonging to the Jung Vrow was the most suitable one to use, so he told Jessie and the maid to get into her, which they did. Keeping hold of Mokarra's arm, to make sure that he didn't get away, Jack took him to the spot where the basket of treasure was concealed and told him to carry it to the boat. The man did so. Jack motioned to him to get in, and then pointed at the oars. Mokarra understood. He picked up the oars, pushed the boat off and began to row in the direction indicated by Saunders.

We haven't the space to detail the long conversation that took place between Jack and Jessie during the trip to Cobar. It is enough to say that they got very well acquainted, and their mutual admiration increased to a considerable extent. Jack told her how he had been within earshot on the night she was abducted by the Dutch skipper and her cousin Sid shot by the mate, Jacobs. In view of Horton's recent treatment of her she was

not particularly surprised to learn that she had been kidnaped at his instigation, and that his statement about having rescued her from the rascals who attacked her was a pure fiction.

Jack then told in detail all that happened to him since discovering himself to Jessie in the hut—all but the finding of the treasure. He decided that it would be prudent to keep that matter in the dark till he got the treasure safely to the consul's office at Batavia. In the course of an hour and a half they came in sight of Cobar village. A vessel flying the British flag, was just leaving the place for Batavia, and Jack hailed her. Going aboard he explained their predicament, and the captain agreed to take them to Batavia, where he expected to arrive before sundown if the wind held.

The wind did hold and they were landed at one of the wharves near the American consulate about dark. The consulate was closed at that hour, so Jack secured a vehicle to carry Jessie, the maid and himself to the Prescott home. As for Mokarra, he let him go now that he had no further use for him. Jessie received a great welcome from the housekeeper. She and Jack learned that her father had returned that morning, and when he heard about his daughter's abduction, and was told that Caspar Horton was at the bottom of it, he acted like a crazy man.

He hired a vehicle and started for Horton's country place, and had probably reached the house by that time. Jack and Jessie both wondered where Sid Danvers was at that moment. For all they knew to the contrary he might be still at the Jap's hut. As a matter of fact he didn't turn up for nearly a week. By that time a whole lot of things had happened. Captain Voort and his crew were in jail, having been captured in the act of burying their supply of smuggled opium. Caspar Horton had sailed away to Singapore after trying to square himself in vain with Mr. Prescott.

His government took the matter up and he was deposed from his office of Resident. Sid and Jessie were astonished when Jack showed them his treasure and told them how he had acquired it. Mr. Prescott took charge of it and sold it to merchants in the business, realizing \$150,000 for the boy. Jack, in the meanwhile, accepted a position in the consulate and went to room with Sid at the Prescott home. The two boys became great chums, while Jack and Jessie got on so well that eventually they became engaged with the approval of her father.

Next week's issue will contain "UP AGAINST A HOT GAME; OR, TWO COLLEGE CHUMS IN WALL STREET."



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or, Lost in the Land of Ice

By GASTON GARNE

(A Serial Story.)

CHAPTER IX.

A Scoundrel's Dreadful Work.

Mr. Hall, the chief engineer, was in a small room off the main engine-room examining the electric dynamo, by which the powerful search-light as well as the lesser ones were operated, when he was visited by Mr. Wills, the chief officer.

"Good-evening, Mr. Hall," said the mate, in a pleasant tone, quite at variance with his customary one. "Looking after your favorite child, are you?"

"Oh, good-evening, Mr. Wills," returned the engineer. "Come in and sit down. I'll be through in a minute. It just struck me that some one of these wires needed further insulation, and I concluded I'd look at them. They seem in danger of burning out."

"You use a tremendous force on the search-light, don't you?" asked Mr. Wills, appearing to be greatly interested, although he had come into the engine-room with quite a different purpose than to talk dynamos and electric engines.

"Yes, we do," said Mr. Hall, "and these other lights ought to have a separate dynamo, by right—for instance, this one over my head."

"Yes, I suppose so," muttered Mr. Wills, looking up from his seat. "I don't know much about these things."

"It's an interesting study—deeply interesting," returned the engineer, laying down a large wrench he had been using. "Well, I can't do anything more now, so suppose we go into my room."

"I say, Hall," said Mr. Wills, suddenly, "why do you risk your life in this way, eh?"

"For science; for the glory of discovering the Pole," returned the other, enthusiastically.

"Yes, but you won't get any of the glory, Hall. Captain Harry Essex gets it all. Now here's a rare chance if you want to take it, one that will make you famous."

"What do you mean?" gasped the engineer, turning white.

He did not grasp the other's meaning, but he knew from his look and tone that he had some desperate scheme in view, and he trembled.

"It's just this," answered the chief officer, in a low, tense tone. "It's for us to seize the vessel, get rid of Harry Essex, and get all the glory ourselves. There are enough on board who will obey me like slaves, and those who don't can be got rid of."

"Seize the steamer?" echoed the engineer, in a hoarse whisper. "You do not mean it? What will you do with the captain?"

"Send him adrift in an open boat or get rid of him some other way. We can easily make up a plausible story. Then I take command, you are still the chief engineer, and we get the glory of this discovery instead of merely working for monthly wages."

"But you would never abandon the captain in this desert of ice?"

"Yes, I would, and snatch the prize. What does it matter? A well-told story will blind the eyes of the world to the truth, and when we succeed, as we must, all will be forgotten in our triumph."

"Our triumph?" echoed the engineer. "A triumph won by fraud and murder?"

"Nonsense! Who will believe that when we win? The glory will cover everything. Come, will you join me in the undertaking?"

"No!" cried the engineer. "Better death than dishonor! Better to die here in the land of ice than be false to my trust. I joined the expedition to serve Captain Harry Essex, and I will be true to him no matter what happens."

"Think of the glory, I say," continued Mr. Wills, detaining the engineer, who had turned toward the door. "You thoroughly understand the ship and are well instructed as to these southern climes. We are sure of Fenton, the good weather will continue, we shall profit by the mistake of others and there is nothing to prevent our earning the glory of being the first to reach the South Pole."

"Not another word!" cried Mr. Hall. "I will not listen to you. You shall not tell me more of your wicked plans. I do not believe the men are so base as to assist you, and certainly I am not so lost to all sense of honor as to join you in this fiendish plot. On the contrary, I intend——"

"To do what?" hissed the chief officer.

"To appeal to the men, and if that fails to warn the captain of your intentions."

"You shall not!" cried Wills, with a fierce growl. "I will kill you first!"

In the middle of the room was the dynamo, which was not running at its full capacity, at one side was the belt connecting it with the engine, on the opposite side was the bench on which Wills had been sitting, and, facing this was a door leading to the passage outside, the room being lighted by a single bulb over this door.

Springing to his feet, Mr. Wills seized the heavy wrench that the engineer had laid down, and, brandishing this, rushed upon the man who would not betray his trust.

The engineer seized the mate's wrist in time to prevent being struck upon the head, and then the two clinched.

They were directly in front of the dynamo, each struggling to get possession of the wrench, the one to do murder with it, the other to prevent it.

"If you won't join me, you shall not betray me!" hissed Wills, savagely, as he put forth all his strength.

The engineer was almost facing the dynamo, when Wills, with his side turned to it, struck at him with his left hand.

Hall threw up his own left, at the same time giving the mate's arm a powerful twist.

The wrench dropped from the mate's hand and fell in such a manner as to cause its metal parts

to touch both terminals of the dynamo, creating a short-circuit.

The engineer was now immediately in front of the dynamo, facing the little table where the poles were situated and from which ran the wires connecting with the lights.

In an instant a blinding flash sprang from the commutator as the metal touched the binding-posts.

For a second only was there a contact, the wrench falling at once to the floor, but it was sufficient.

The lights went out, and with an agonized cry that would ring in the mate's ears for many a day, the engineer fell to the floor, dead.

Then the lights returned, and Wills, blinking from the effects of the flash, which he had not received directly, stood staring at the man at his feet.

"Dead!" he muttered, "and now no one knows my secret."

At that moment Phil, Sadie and Dick came running in.

CHAPTER X.

Phil's Promotion.

"What is the matter?" cried Phil, bursting into the room.

"What has happened?" asked Dick. "What made the lights go out?"

"Who gave that awful scream?" gasped Sadie. "It was perfectly dreadful."

Footsteps were heard approaching, and Wills, turning toward the door, said:

"There has been a terrible accident, and I am afraid that poor Hall will never see again."

"Blind!" gasped Phil, kneeling at the engineer's side and passing his hand over the man's face.

Then a terrible cry was wrung from him in spite of himself, and he staggered back almost unnerved.

"Heavens!" he cried, turning the color of ashes. "The man is dead!"

"No, don't say it's as bad as that!" groaned Wills. "It can't be; I won't believe it."

Mr. Fenton, the second mate, and one or two stokers came in at this moment.

"What's that?" the ice pilot asked. "Mr. Hall dead? How did it happen? Who was here? Did any one see it?"

"Yes, I did," answered Wills, huskily, turning his face from the others. "I was too late to prevent it or to even warn him."

"How did it happen?"

"Hall was working at the dynamo with a wrench and in some unexplainable way dropped it so that it touched both terminals at the same time, making a short-circuit."

"Great heavens!"

"He was directly in front of it, almost touching it, in fact, when there came the most awful flash I ever saw, that would have blinded me had I been looking straight at it, and then he fell with a cry I shall never forget."

"It is strange," muttered Fenton, bending over the dead man. "He was always so careful about

such things that I can hardly believe he could have been so careless."

"He understood everything so well," added Phil, "that I presume he never thought of the danger. The shock must have been a terrific one. Perhaps the fall on the iron floor paralyzed the brain, and he died before he could recover from it."

"Here, Mr. Wills," said Fenton, "help me carry him to his room, poor fellow."

"I couldn't touch him," murmured the mate, and Sadie saw him shudder. "It was all so dreadful that I couldn't bear it. To think that I could not prevent it, could not even warn him of his terrible fate."

The man covered his face with his hands and hurried out of the room, while Sadie, who had been watching him more closely than the others, said to herself:

"I never thought he cared enough for anybody to show so much emotion. I don't believe in more than half of it, and I think my man needs watching."

Mr. Fenton then asked two or three of the sailors to take the body of the engineer to his room and, leaving Phil in charge, went up to inform the captain of what had happened.

Sadie could not bear to stay in the place where so dreadful an accident had so recently taken place, and she went away without looking at the engineer, as she had intended.

Dick remained with Phil, who was quite capable of looking after things, but it was some time before the boys said anything, so overcome were they by what had just occurred.

After a time Captain Harry Essex came into the engine-room and, taking Phil's hand, said, kindly:

"My boy, a tremendous responsibility has suddenly devolved upon you through this unfortunate occurrence, but I know that you are both faithful and capable, and I wish to tell you that I believe that you will do your duty just the same."

"Thank you, sir," said Phil, gratefully. "I know that it is a tremendous responsibility for a boy of my age, the care of a fine ship like this, but I will do my very best and will thankfully accept any advice or assistance that you can give."

"You were not here when it happened?" asked the captain briefly.

"No, sir."

"And knew nothing of it?"

"Only what Mr. Wills said."

"Can you account for it?"

"Yes, although it is difficult. Such things are likely to happen, but not often with a man of Mr. Hall's experience. I cannot think of his being careless, and can only account for it in one way. He has been taken suddenly faint and has dropped the wrench at the most critical moment."

"And yet he was a man of splendid physique. I never would imagine that he had a weak heart or anything of that sort. He was extremely temperate, took excellent care of himself, and was more nearly an example of perfect manhood than any one on board."

"He may have had some weakness that we did not know of," suggested Phil. "He may not have known of it himself, even."

(To be continued.)

Fame and Fortune Weekly

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INTERESTING ARTICLES

FALLS ASLEEP IN MIDST OF DEBUT AS BURGLAR

Discharged from his job as a grocer's errand boy Fernand Spanier, eighteen years old, stumbled into the same pitfall recently in an alternative career.

When the concierge this morning opened the salon in the home of M. D. E. Gampos, formerly a Portuguese diplomat, he found Fernand asleep on a divan, with a burglar's jimmy in his hand and a collection of silverware by his side. He was removed to a prison cot, where he resumed his slumber.

URGED FOR FUTURE MEMORIALS

Westminster Abbey, England's national shrine and hall of fame, is overflowing and must have in addition to contain future memorials. Such is the recommendation of a body of clergymen and laymen who have completed a three-year investigation. They favor, in a report issued recently, the erection at a cost of \$1,000,000 of one of the most important additions to the Abbey since the building of the Henry VIII Chapel.

This would be a structure running parallel to the Henry VII Chapel and consisting of an ambulatory around the chapter house and a series of cloisters between it and the old palace yard.

"The time has come when the nation must decide whether or not Westminster Abbey is to retain the place it has held for centuries as the shrine of the nation's memories of great men and women," said the investigating committee, which was headed by the Archbishop of York. "Delay in making this decision is no longer possible."

Pointing out that there is no further space within the Abbey itself for memorials, the churchmen condemn alike the removal of the existing monuments and the erection of a new hall of fame on another site.

"A hall of this kind," they assert, "would be merely an empty shell—a body without a soul."

The whole empire would be called upon to share the expense of the new addition.

MISSING PERSONS BUREAU DEALS CHIEFLY WITH CITY'S RUNAWAYS

Comforting distressed mothers whose children have failed to come home from work or school is a duty requiring both sympathy and understanding, according to Captain John Ayer of the Missing Persons Bureau of the New York police. Not only is comfort required but service in locating the prodigals. Sometimes the missing youngsters do not need locating: they frequently return home before the police have more than begun to take notes on the family history.

"Stories of discontent, stories of family hardships, and mostly stories of family quarrels and petty bickering—that's what we get every day; and from these we try to piece out why Mary ran away, where she has gone, and what will become of her," says Captain Ayer.

"The first thing we have to do is to convince mothers that their girls have not been taken by white-slavers. In all the fifteen years of my work with this bureau I have never heard of a single instance where a missing girl has been taken by white-slavers. It is a great disappointment to those who hold up New York as a wicked city, I know. I show the mothers how preposterous their theory is, and after we have talked a little I get enough of a clue to know that Mary left home of her own free-will.

The general conception of a Missing Persons Bureau is a place where amnesia victims are united to their families, long lost sons are found, to be told that they have inherited a fortune, or absent-minded old men who have wandered away from home are restored to their anxious daughters.—N. Y. Times.

15,000 ANXIOUS TO ACCOMPANY DYOTT TO BRAZIL'S WILDS TO HUNT FAWCETT

Commander George M. Dyott, who, as related in The World recently, wants a fourth man for his expedition into the "green hills of Amazonia," in search of another explorer, Col. P. H. Fawcett, and of the ruins of a lost civilization, states he had received 15,000 applications.

He offered hard labor in the stifling steam baths of the tropical wilderness, the dangers of hostile Indians, of wild animals, of tropical fever—all for a merely nominal recompense. He hoped that some one would volunteer—a man, it was put, "to whom money, the comforts of life and life itself mean very little."

The replies came by cable, telegraph, air mail and by special delivery, from every State, from all parts of Canada and from several European countries. They came from high school students of eighteen, from established professional men of forty, having families, from the highest and the lowest walks of life. Approximately one-fifth are from New York, another fifth from California, and the remainder fairly evenly distributed.

For three days the Post Office has had a special man delivering Commander Dyott's mail. One girl has been kept busy just opening the letters. The Commander has devoted himself entirely to reading and sorting them. Up to last night he had gone through 1,500.

"I intend to read every application," he said. "It is really quite extraordinary."

The Mahogany Box

"Bad luck to-day, good Bruno, bad luck. What we are to do next, old fellow, I cannot imagine—can you?"

Peter Fairfax was the speaker, and he gave a great sigh as he looked down upon a noble specimen of a Newfoundland moving along at his side.

Old Bruno glanced up at his young master's face as if he knew what had been said, and then hung his head as if he felt sad, too.

"Our mission has been a fruitless one," continued the boy. "We will be driven from our home, and heaven only knows what will become of mother then. Miser Hessling is indomitable, immovable, and he's a villain."

With the last word Peter brought his foot down hard upon the earth, and at the same time brushed a great tear from off his fair cheek.

The dog licked the hand of the youth, as if in full sympathy with him.

Wearied with a long walk, Peter reached home just as the sun was setting behind the great hills that stretched in a long line at the westward, just as the shadows of night began to flit across the fertile valley in which Widow Fairfax lived.

He was met at the door by his mother, who wore an anxious look upon her wan, yet handsome face.

"Your sad countenance betokens ill news, my boy," said the dame with tremulous voice. "Nothing was accomplished, I fear."

"Nothing, mother. Miser Hessling said you must leave the farm within a week, or he will eject you at the hands of the sheriff."

"You told him of the papers that were lost with the mahogany box?"

"Yes; all that you directed me to say, and much more that I knew myself."

"What said he in reply?"

"That you lied, mother!"

Mrs. Fairfax sank into a chair at this and covered her face with her hands, while her frame shook with deep emotion.

"I'd have knocked him down if I could!" cried the lad, and he strode up and down the room for a minute with clenched fists, then went to the window and gazed out upon the fast fading twilight with a vacant stare.

Peter was a boy of but fifteen years. He was intelligent and plucky, and as he stood beside the casement that night resolutions for future action were firmly formed.

Mrs. Fairfax had been a widow but a few months.

Three years before, she, with her husband and Peter, an only child, twelve years of age, had emigrated from New York cultural pursuits.

At the time of taking up their abode in the West the inhabitants of that section of the country were frequently annoyed by thieves, who made daring robberies, carrying off whatever of value they could lay their hands upon.

Houses were entered and pilfered in a mysterious manner, and not the slightest clue could be obtained to the perpetrators of the crimes.

Large rewards were offered for the apprehension of any one of the robbers, dead or alive, but

this availed nothing, as no one could trace the bandits to their lair.

Shortly before the death of Mr. Fairfax his house had been entered, and among other things a mahogany box taken, in which were all the jewels the family possessed and all the valuable papers.

The day before the robbery the farm had been paid for in full, and a receipt taken of Zebulon Hessling, commonly called "Miser" Hessling, from his parsimonious propensities, and a deed was to be properly made out and delivered.

The loss of the papers by the robbery had reached the ear of Hessling, and this, followed by the death of Mr. Fairfax, gave the old villain opportunity to defraud the widow and her son, and he was not slow in setting about the accomplishment of his nefarious purpose.

As no proofs existed of payment having been made, Mrs. Fairfax saw herself at the mercy of Miser Hessling.

Peter stood silently by the window for many minutes; finally he started, as if awakened from sleep; he crossed the room, and taking a position beside the matron's chair, said in a gentle voice:

"Mother."

Mrs. Fairfax looked up, and putting her arm around the youth, drew him close to her.

"What is it, my son?"

"I am going to leave you for a few days."

"Going where?"

"Away to Coridon."

"It is fifty miles away, Peter."

"I know that, but I can make it in two days on foot, transact my business in one, and return inside the week you are allowed on the farm."

"What is the mission, Peter?"

To get the position once offered me as an apprentice. If we are to depend upon my hands for support hereafter, the sooner I am earning something the better. I can get board, clothes and fifty dollars, the first year. This money, with what we can sell of personal property, will keep you in comfortable circumstances, and after the first year I shall receive much more."

Mrs. Fairfax did not oppose the boy, and aided his preparations for an early start on the morrow.

Old Bruno was with him, but Peter had promised to send the dog back after crossing the big hills to be a protection to his mother.

The youth took a straight line toward Coridon, guided by a pocket compass, and stopped not to follow the newlylaid and public highway.

Long before noon he reached the most wild and desolate part of the "White Rock Hills," as they were called. He was walking upon the margin of a deep, rocky cut or gorge, when old Bruno came bounding up to him, manifesting a good deal of excitement by barking lustily.

"What is it, old fellow?" said Peter, snapping his fingers at the dog.

Bruno dashed away a few rods, then came bounding back, as if he would lead his master in another direction.

The youth knew the traits of the animal so well that he felt certain something of interest had been found, and although it would detain him a little, Peter determined to indulge the faithful brute this time.

"Lead the way," cried the boy, "and I'll follow."

So Bruno bounded down the steep enclosure and his master scrambled down after him.

When they had reached a point about midway between the brow and the base of the gorge old Bruno suddenly disappeared as if by magic.

Soon he reappeared through a fissure in the rock which was entirely hidden from view by a clump of close-growing bushes.

"Cubs or young foxes in there?" asked Peter.

Bruno's only answer was a bark, and he again disappeared from sight.

Laying down his bundle, our little hero followed the dog into the dark cavity.

Moving cautiously down through a narrow, uneven fissure, he soon found himself in a spacious cavern, into which just sufficient light stole to show that the walls were some twenty feet apart.

After his eyes became more accustomed to the darkened chamber, Peter saw that he was in the abode of some human being.

The sight that met his gaze made his heart stand still for a moment. Here were piles of heavy silverware upon the floor and in boxes. Niches in the wall contained gold and silver coins, watches, rings and pins of every description.

Peter was completely bewildered. What could it mean?

In the corner were piles of small caskets and jewel cases, and while staring at these in amazement his eyes fell upon an object that made him cry out for joy—there was his mother's mahogany box.

He seized the treasure, and the lock being broken, the lid yielded readily to his touch.

"Here are all the papers and treasures," he said in a hoarse, tremulous whisper. "I will take them directly back to my mother. This a den of thieves and the depository of their plunder. I will—"

His soliloquy was cut short by the darkening of the cavern and a low growling from Bruno.

Looking up, he saw before him a large, dark-faced man, dressed in a hunter's garb, with slouch hat.

"Well, my young lark, what do ye here?" asked the stranger in a gruff voice. "I'm thinking you'll never take that box to your mother; you'll more likely take the news to your father, 'cause dead boys never tell nothing to the living. I'll just open yer windpipe and you'll slip off easy like."

Drawing a huge knife from his belt beneath his hunting shirt, the robber caught Peter before he could make an attempt to escape, and bending his head back he brought the youthful face around beneath his muscular arm, and lifted the keen blade as deliberately to carry his threat into execution as a butcher does to cut the throat of a lamb.

The shining steel descended upon the full, white neck, but before the skin was severed, Bruno, who had been watching with gleaming eyes, leaped like a lion upon the bandit, and setting his huge jaws upon the throat of the villain, brought him down upon the floor of the cavern with such force as to loosen the knife from his hold and send it spinning several feet away.

As soon as Peter sufficiently recovered from the shock to take in the situation he dealt the desperado a blow over the head with a billet of wood sufficiently hard to lay him senseless, and then bade Rover loosen his hold.

After thoroughly binding the ruffian with cords and thongs that were found in abundance, Peter told Bruno to watch him, and taking the mahogany box so as to be sure of its contents, started for home as fast as his legs would carry him.

By the middle of the afternoon Peter returned with a party of men and horses to take care of the robber and the stolen goods.

Bruno still sat on guard, and the villain, who had returned to consciousness, swore lustily at the intruders, as he saw fit to call them.

The desperado was, of course, sent to the proper place for criminals and a large number of valuables found in the cavern were identified and restored.

Widow Fairfax and Peter were more fortunate and worthy than any of the rest.

The papers of the mahogany box placed them in full possession of the farm, and would have made it very unpleasant for old Miser Hessling had not the widow, in the kindness of her heart, refused to prosecute.

Peter received the large reward offered for the apprehension of the robber and it was the foundation of his future wealth.

No reward could be bestowed upon old Bruno that he could appreciate, save abundance of love and caresses from all who knew the noble old fellow.

What became of the rest of the gang of robbers no one knew; but finding their rendezvous discovered, they fled to other parts.

The cavern became quite a resort for parties seeking the wonders of nature, and bore the title of "Robbers' Cave." And to-day the most prominent names carved upon the soft sandstone walls are those of Peter Fairfax and Bruno.

DEATH RINGS GONG ON 'TIGER FLOWERS'

Theodore (Tiger) Flowers, thirty-two, former middleweight champion of the world and one of the most popular Negroes in the prize ring, died recently in a private hospital.

News of his death came as a surprise, for it had been announced he was in satisfactory condition following a minor operation for removal of a growth over his left eye. The announcement was made through the office of Walk Miller, Flower's manager, after information concerning the fighter's condition had been refused by Dr. W. G. Fralick, who performed the operation recently at his private hospital.

The former champion, known to fight fans as "the Georgia Deacon," was to have fought Micky Walker within sixty days, Walker having been ordered to meet him under pain of suspension.

Flowers sprang into fistic prominence by knocking out Bob Lawson, Jack Townsend and Tut Jackson at the Harlem Arena in 1924. He won the middle-weight championship February 26, 1926, from Harry Greb, who died under similar circumstances in October, 1926. He lost his title to Micky Walker in Chicago, December 3 of the same year.

Flowers was a colorful battler who wore down his opponents with tireless energy. He was known as one of the most gentlemanly fighters in the game.

Flowers' last battle in New York took place November 12, when he knocked out Leo Gates, a heavyweight, in four rounds.

GOOD READING

INSULTS TO RELIGION

The Indian Legislature is considering a bill for penalizing insults to religion. The proposed addition to the Indian penal code reads as follows:

"Whoever, by words, either spoken or written, or by signs or by visible representations, or otherwise, intentionally insults or attempts to insult the religion, or intentionally outrages or attempts to outrage the religious feelings of any class of his Majesty's subjects, shall be punished with imprisonment . . . for a term which may extend to two years or with a fine or with both."

EDISON SEEKS RUBBER IN OVER 200 PLANTS

The Boston Transcript in a copyrighted article recently said that more than 200 species of trees and shrubs were shipped from the Arnold Arboretum to the Edison laboratories in New Jersey for research, looking toward discovery of a substitute for rubber which could be manufactured from sap of trees possible to grow in New England.

The story says that the venture is understood to have the backing of a financial combination including Ford, Firestone and Edison. It was learned that two Edison representatives spent two days in selecting the experimental subjects from the great collection of growths from the arboretum, maintained by Harvard University as a public park as well as for scientific study.

THE CHANGING PIANO

The possibilities of an entirely new literature for the piano through radical changes in the construction of the present instrument and by means of the mechanical piano are discussed by Beryl Rubinstein, the pianist, in *The Musician*.

"The latest development in piano composition came with Debussy," he says. "This development was one not in the use of the keyboard but in that of the pedal. The whole-tone scale of Debussy permitted of pedal effects impossible before his time."

As for the possibilities of the mechanical piano for which Stravinsky and others have suggested a separate and distinct development of composition, Mr. Rubinstein is confident that such a departure offers a promising field. "I understood that one very well-known pianist was able to play a chromatic glissando. I don't believe it. The raised position of the black keys makes it impossible, to my mind. But perhaps a pedal could be invented to lower the black keys as occasion demanded. This would be a marvelous idea."

BLASTING TESTS SHOW DANGER TO NEAR-BY BUILDINGS IS SLIGHT

To determine the effect on buildings of a heavy blast of dynamite, and at what distances injury might be sustained, a series of experiments was recently conducted by E. H. Rockwell, dean of engineering at Rutgers University.

Measurements of the earth vibrations trans-

mitted were made with an instrument similar in function to the seismograph, which is used to record earthquake shocks, and also by means of steel pins one-quarter of an inch in diameter and of various lengths. These pins were set in groups on a hard, level surface, and were so arranged that if one toppled over it would not affect its companions in the least. Pins of varying lengths up to fifteen inches long were used in the experiments, groups of them being placed at different distances from the blasting centre.

None of the pins fell at points further than 200 feet from the explosion, and the conclusion arrived at consequently was that only buildings within this radius of ordinary well-drill blasting could be damaged by such a blast. In fact, the seismograph instrument and graduated steel pins indicated that the effect of the average blast on a house 26 by 42 feet and thirty feet high, even at a distance of 1,800 feet, would be only equivalent to a wind blowing at the rate of twelve pounds pressure per square foot against the structure.

MAKING SHOES FIT THE FEET

Facial differences, if exhaustively catalogued, would fill many volumes. And were such a library of facts compiled there would have to be a chapter (a long one, too) devoted to feet.

Observing travelers who have lived among the various peoples of the earth know that nationality often reveals itself in the feet. One comes to know the French foot, the German foot, the Italian, English and Holland foot by the shape of shoe that covers it. This is more than just a matter of national fashion, though that, of course, plays a part; it has to do as well with the form of the foot.

Thus it is not surprising to learn that American shoes have been worrying the Filipinos. The last that fits the American doughboy does not ride so well on the foot of the native soldier in the Philippines. Hence a special type of shoe, made not here but in the islands, is hereafter to be provided for the Philippine scouts.

"The endeavor satisfactorily to fit shoes for the Philippine scouts," say army experts, "culminated in the appointment of a board of army officers, which recently convened in the Philippine Islands. This board reported that American shoes are not suitable for the Philippine scouts, among whom there are differences in feet due to tribal characteristics. This board found that the native foot differs materially from the American or European foot.

"In recommendations on the subject the Medical Department suggested that the development of the proper type of shoe for military personnel of the Filipino race should be based upon the fact that many Filipinos do not wear shoes. Down through many generations their feet have not been accustomed to the binding of foot gear. Hence the shape of the foot is not similar to the shape of the foot of the inhabitants of Western countries."

CURRENT NEWS

25,000 WORKERS LOSE LIVES IN
SINGLE YEAR

A report that 25,000 workers were killed in one year in the United States served to spur a special commission to give extreme importance to an international conference to be held at Geneva next year in the campaign against accidents to laborers.

Albert Thomas, Director of the International Labor Office, told the committee that "massacre of human life on the field of labor is as cruel as the massacre on the field of battle in wartime."

Further reports indicated that labor accidents in the United States cost \$4,000,000,000 annually and in France 4,000,000,000 francs.

NOBEL PRIZES AND WINNERS

According to a report of the Nobel Foundation its total funds now amount to nearly 31,000,000 crowns, or more than \$8,000,000. Beginning in 1901, Nobel prizes amounting to a total value of between thirteen and fourteen million crowns have been awarded. Of these, 23 prizes went to medical men, 23 were awarded in chemistry, 32 in physics, 25 in literature and 28 for the promotion of peace. The recipients of prizes included 30 Germans, 24 Frenchmen, 20 Englishmen, 9 Swedes, 8 Americans, 7 Swiss; Hollanders and Danes, 6 each; Belgians, Norwegians, Italians and Austrians, 4 each; Spaniards, 3; Canadians, Poles and Russians, 2 each; Irish and Bengalese, 1 each. Of the peace prizes 6 went to France, 4 to Switzerland and 4 to America.

COOLIDGE COULDN'T PAY TAXES ON
WASHINGTON RESIDENCE

President Coolidge, according to William P. Richards, tax assessor for the District of Columbia, would lack \$300,000 of being able to pay his taxes from his salary if he owned the White House and the grounds around it, valued at \$22,000,000.

The Capitol and grounds are assessed at \$53,000,000; Treasury Building and lot at \$23,000,000; the House Office Building at \$5,000,000; the Senate Office Building, \$5,000,000; the State, War and Navy Building, \$13,500,000; the Congressional Library, \$10,000,000, and the Patent Office, \$8,000,000.

These properties, belonging to Uncle Sam, are tax free. The assessments are based on the value of adjacent property.

ICE CARNIVAL TO BE COLORFUL

Preparations are well under way for the spectacular ice carnival depicting episodes of the Court of Catherine the Great, entitled "A Night in St. Moritz," which is to be staged in Madison Square Garden on the night of Jan. 11 in aid of the New York Music Week Association.

The Music Association, of which Miss Isabel Lowden is director, has for several years conducted a series of contests and auditions for young music students of this city. Last year 10,000 student candidates were heard by a committee of forty leading musical artists, including Leopold Auer, Rachmaninoff and Bauer.

Mrs. Henry P. Davison, Miss Ann Nicholas and

C. Stanley Mitchell have succeeded in gaining the assistance of men and women who are not only interested in skating, but also in music. Mrs. Tremper Longman is directing the spectacle. A feature of it will be the display of magnificent Russian sleighs of the period to be drawn by reindeer across the ice. Miss Beatrice Loughran, skating champion for North America; Mrs. Theresa Blanchard, Miss Maribel Vinson, Nathaniel W. Miles, Sherwin C. Badger and Roger P. Turner, all of whom have been champions, will figure also in the events.—N. Y. Times.

HUDSON SEAL BECOMES A STYLISH
TRIMMING

Hudson seal is the first of the heavier furs to be cut up into the complicated piecings and incrustations that are now so much in vogue for coats and gowns of silk and wool. Henri Vergne shows some of the most ambitious of these intricately seamed effects. One coat of Hudson seal was seamed both front and back in a series of laddering V's and was draped to the left. Almost everything imaginable has been done to fur heretofore except to drape it—it has always been considered too bulky for that—but this coat manages to introduce draping and still retain both its slenderness and chic.

Muffs have come back! Rather shrinking and inconspicuous little muffs, to be sure, but muffs for all that. Generally they are made in a semi-circular shape about twelve inches across. If a small, round and flat pillow, with a gathered puffing encircling it, were to be cut in two, the result would look very much like these little muffs. They are made in breitschwantz, in shaved lamb or in any of the clipped furs of cloth-like texture.

SWIG OF RED WINE PUTS PEP IN HENS
AND HOMING PIGEONS FORGET HOMES

Liquor problems have developed even in the bird world.

French authorities are practically unanimous in their belief that red wine contains highly valuable vitamins and Dr. Rougier of the Bordeaux Medical College declares that tests show pigeons thrive on it. Other observers have replied with the assertion that homing pigeons which are given wine never get home.

Dr. Rougier extracted all the vitamins from the diet of some pigeons. He said that those in the diet group which were given a few spoonfuls of Bordeaux wine daily remained alert and vigorous while the dry ones wilted. He said also that the wilted ones revived rapidly when they took to strong drinks.

Prohibition advocates, on the other hand, cite a recent experience of a group of fifty Belgian homing pigeons, half of which started a journey dry while the other half were given a ration of red Burgundy. The dry pigeons flew home and the wet ones disappeared. A few of them straggled into the dovecote hours behind time.

Laying hens show their appreciation for an occasional drink by laying more eggs, it was announced here recently after completion of several experiments with hens.

Fame and Fortune Weekly

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